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The Insatiability of the Red Brigades

If certain political settlements of agonising difficulty could be brought about in Northern Ireland, or on the West Bank of the Jordan River, then a number of people now classed as 'terrorists' might hang up their guns and return to something like normal life. Similar propositions may be advanced about Zimbabwe, Kurdistan and many other places: and it has always been part of a socialist's business to explain the connection between violence and political repression. That task, which may be urgent in the case of, say, the Patriotic Front, does not extend to the Clockwork Orange terrorists of the Baader-Meinhof gang and the Red Brigades. They are distinguished by the infinity of their demands: they want everything, and nothing, so that there is no kind of settlement that could ever be made with them. Most people will not take up arms of any kind until they are confronted with unmistakable evidence of cruelty and repression: the speciality of the Red Brigades is that they will slaughter anyone for the sake of such purely metaphysical ideas as the 'latent violence of the state'.

Signor Moro was a politician who scarcely sought, and did not receive, the admiration of the Left. The stewardship of Christian Democracy in Italy has not been a very honourable one, and lately the Italian electorate has pronounced with increasing determination against the backwardness and corruption of the system. But Moro and his associates did not run wholly fraudulent elections. They did not censor newspapers, torture their prisoners nor imprison their opponents without trial. They were not engaged in a war of aggression against another country, nor in the suppression of a national minority by force. It takes an invincible sophistry to turn this into a justification for proceeding to what the Red Brigades like to call 'armed struggle'.

The special and insatiable character of the terrorists of the Meinhof/Red Brigade description has not always been acknowledged on the Left. Indeed, the truth is that the Baader-Meinhof gang, which is the parental formation, gained much benefit in its early years from the complaisance, and sometimes the active support, of socialist intellectuals. A lesser, though not insignificant effect of the Moro affair may be to bring to an end that particular line of thinking.

Other effects are harder to estimate. Of course, nobody is pleased except the enemies of pluralism, tolerance and democracy.

But if the terrorist aim is to somehow discredit the orthodox Left, or to destroy the 'historic compromise', it is an aim that is not likely to be fulfilled. There has been no ambiguity whatever in the Italian Communist Party's attitudes to the Moro affair, and it would be an astonishing thing if any serious number of voters were to blame the PCI for it. Signor Ugo Pecchioli, the Communist spokesman on matters of law and order, holds a position which is not substantially different from that of the Christian Democratic equivalent – and, although there have been some criticisms of this policy in terms of safeguards against arrest and such matters as the arming of plain-clothes policemen, it cannot be legitimately portrayed as a grossly repressive or illiberal programme.

If the aim is to undermine democracy as a whole, that seems no more likely of fulfilment. So far, apart from some understandably panicky moments in parliamentary debate, the Italian political system has come through the episode rather well. There were, naturally, demands from the neo-fascists for a return to capital punishment and for the granting of draconian police powers. But these were successfully resisted. There are plenty of people around who like to represent democracy as an incurably delicate plant, scarcely worth the trouble of preserving, and these people shade off into simple philistines who insist on regarding Italian affairs as comic-opera punctuated with pistol-shots. To be sure, democracy is never fully healthy anywhere, but it has more tenacity than its enemies credit it with, and no serious number of Italians have been persuaded by the events of the last few years that there would be any advantage in a return to dictatorship.

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Notes on Politics and Power

Christopher Hitchens writes from Rome:

It would be an exaggeration to say that a pall of fear hangs over Rome while the Red Brigades keep everyone guessing. A surprising number of citizens openly profess their indifference to the fate of a politician so decisively identified with the old ruling elite. The feelings of his supporters have also been extremely hurt by Moro's long and apologetic letters from captivity, in which he even criticised his dead bodyguards, said that no more lives should be sacrificed for 'an abstract principle', and urged that if Russia can exchange prisoners with Chile, then surely the Red Brigade detainees could be treated as prisoners of war.

The protracted nature of the episode has led to a certain erosion of solidarity as well. Nobody dared criticise the battery of exceptional police powers when they were rushed into law a few weeks ago, but this week a group of distinguished establishment lawyers in Milan denounced them as a threat to liberty and said that the existing law was quite competent enough.

The Communist Party is making the most of the chance to pose as a party of order. Its spokesmen are the most hardline about cleaning up the anarchist and Stalinist dissenters who disfigure the streets and the universities, and who are considered moral supporters of terrorism. With the local elections due on May 14, this auction on law and order can only intensify. So far there are some Christian Democrats and some Socialists who are prepared to talk with the gangsters, but the Communist Party is adamant that there can be no deal of any kind. The utter and spectacular incompetence of the Italian police authorities makes this debate slightly academic, but the tone of it is important in confirming the role of the PCI as part of what it calls 'the national majority'.

At a recent political cabaret in Turin, the height of bad taste was achieved by an act which showed the Christian Democrats refusing to accept Moro back even when he was offered on a plate. He has certainly not made a great showing from the hearts and minds point of view, and a Right-wing proposal that he be named President immediately was greeted with embarrassed silence. The general view is that he can become a martyr, but never a hero..

Arms Sales: the Cruise of the Tarbatness

On 15th September the fleet auxiliary *Tarbatness* will sail out of a British harbour laden with Ministry of Defence military hardware. The second in a series of floaters – shipborne defence exhibitions – the trip is part of the MoD's role as travelling salesmen. As the detailed plans for the tour have yet to be cleared by the Foreign Office, the list of countries is still a secret. They are Portugal, Spain, Nigeria, Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico. Two are out and out dictatorships and some of the rest are less than model democracies. The Defence Sales Organisation, the marketing arm of the MoD, employs no less than 400 people to promote Britain's range of armoury. The functionaries recruit new companies to join their efforts as though it were part of an exclusive 'club'. First names are *de rigeur* in this community. Free handouts to new club members written by an army officer Lt Col R. Jarman, have recently crossed our desks. Col Jarman ('I answer best to Robert') provides a wonderful insight into the operations of a thoroughly modern industrial complex.

Manufacturers keen on joining the floater can rent space on the touring ship at £1,500 a go. 'We produce the right contacts on the ground', writes Col Jarman. 'Specially trained teams of soldiers and marines will travel on the ship ready to carry out demonstrations of firepower and mobility' on landing. The trip is being 50 per cent subsidised by another government department, the Overseas Trade Board.

Newcomers to the Defence Sales club are given a wide range of suggestions as to appropriate publications and even freelance journalists to contact for write-ups in newspapers and magazines. There is a voluminous and glossy British Defence Equipment catalogue – a must if you are joining 'the club'. The catalogue, 1,500 pages and three volumes of everything from tanks and CS gas grenades to swords and rations, is composed of paid-for advertising masquerading in the editorial style of a 'catalogue'. Needless to say, following development in Northern Ireland, there is now a heavy emphasis on 'Internal Security' equipment. It is supplied to British defence attachés around the world for free issue to key military procurement men. For instance, India has 57 copies. This vital club document is, however, produced by a family-owned firm with long standing MoD connections, Combined Service Publications of Farnborough, who also provide 70 of the army's Regimental magazines. Newcomers are advised to advertise in a range of publications including Jane's yearbooks; if they want 'a write-up in this type of publication', they are steered to 'a specialist author of repute', one Christopher Foss. Introductions are also supplied to contributors 'to the more serious papers'.

The Defence Sales Organisation also encourages its manufacturer protegées to participate in an increasing number of shows intended to promote their hardware and software. Both the Royal Navy and British Army vie to outdo each other with their own shows – the second army exhibition at Aldershot comes up in June this year. Besides that, there is a permanent Defence Equipment Exhibition inside the MoD's main Whitehall building used by the Head of Defence Sales and his senior staff to 'brief important foreign visitors'. To each of these shows, the DSO brings tours of foreign generals with purchasing power. Such delegations are invariably invited round a selection of the major military factories, and lavishly banqueted at public expense.

For the smaller manufacturer, a recent renegade from the DSO, Brigadier Dick Purvis, has recently founded the Defence Manufacturers Association, designed to provide 200 smaller manufacturers with a £300-a-year introduction to UK and foreign military sales. In the United States, such organisations flourish, and compose astonishing long directories of military commands and their personnel – useful to see where the bribes work best. In Britain, Brig Purvis' organisation has a staff of ex-officers and others, 'specialised in working with government departments'. Bribery is unnecessary in Britain. Col Jarman, together with equally chatty naval and RAF colleagues is always available, to anyone, as a Military Consultant – 'it goes without saying that no fee is involved'. As a 'military focal point' he will give a 'steer through the Ministry of Defence if necessary'. When he is away, he is 'probably visiting somebody like you on their home ground'.

Britain now struggles with France to keep in the top three for arms exports. It certainly is nice to see defence attachés in touch with late 20th century reality working as 'overseas agents' of the Defence Sales Organisation and not MI6. Nice too, to see friendly public servants striving as diligently as these. But couldn't these diligent people sell something else? Butter mountains, perhaps.

Thames TV Lowers the Political Heat

There is a new incentive scheme at the BBC, guaranteed to beat Phase 3 – or any other phase. It is called Thames Television. Thames chairman Howard Thomas has become the Tommy Docherty of the airwaves. As his company braces itself to announce a £10m. profit this year, his cheque book raids on the BBC have left the Corporation floundering and crying foul. Only six months ago Brian Cowgill left his new post as Director of News and Current Affairs to become Managing Director at Thames, at a reported salary of £27,000 per annum. This sporting impressario can now boast a gallery of assorted talents who have flipped channels; Morecambe and Wise the funny men, Leitch and Lang from sports broadcasting. Pagnamenta and Townson from current affairs.

Of course the BBC protests too much,

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'Either we climb down – or he climbs up here . . . !'

and plays up the bait dangled before the defectors to exaggerate both their greed and its own poverty. (Further licence negotiations with the Home Office are under way.) Townson's reported £20,000 to run the successor programme planned for the *This Week* slot is vastly exaggerated. But there is a serious point here. Thames had a good, tough documentary and current affairs tradition going back to Jeremy Isaacs. The present producer, David Elstein, and reporters like Peter Taylor and Jonathan Dimbleby, were having constant run-ins with authority – represented by Lady Plowden, Roy Mason, and the Home Office. Thames don't like the heat and want to get out of that particular kitchen. Mr Cowgill has announced that he wants current affairs to be 'less austere'. It was Cowgill who turned down the Thames proposal for a series on the history of conflict in N. Ireland-flat. The company may go back to reporting rather than analysis, to magazine formats with a news approach which allows you to lie back and enjoy it.

It is ironic that ITV's premier London contractor should play safe when it is wallowing in advertising revenue. Those who saw ITV current affairs as a source of scrutiny and challenge will raise an eyebrow at the wholesale importation of a new, blander style. And what is a company raking in that kind of profit doing without a training programme which can bring on some talent of its own, and instead preferring to solve its problem by poaching? Certainly the standard ITV plea for a second channel to engage all of the underemployed talent in their own ranks looks a trifle odd when those ranks have been so heavily supplemented – to their dismay – by this influx of talent only too willing to leave the broad acres of the two-channel BBC.

The Manufacture of By-election News

Is there any point at all in the traditional by-election reporting as practised by the political cadres of the national press? The idea of reporting is, presumably, to convey information. Yet some of the 'information' that emerged during the Garscadden campaign seems, in retrospect, to have existed at the 'Prince Charles is to marry X' level of veracity.

The Labour candidate, Donald Dewar, supported abortion law reform ten years ago. Since a quarter of Garscadden's voters are Catholics – and traditionally solid Labour supporters – Dewar's views were bound to provoke comment. A campaign, spearheaded by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child, was noisily launched. So far, so predictable. But then the Fleet Street scribes and TV crews took over. Noise was equated with impact. 'LABOUR FACES POLL WORRY ON ABORTIONS' ran one *Sunday Times* headline. 'It could be undoing of Labour . . . abortion is making all the running.' Other papers echoed similar thoughts.

Since political pundits are, naturally, infallible, it must have been the voters who got it wrong. As they left the polling stations a random selection of more than 3,000 were asked how they had voted and why. According to these figures (from a BBC poll conducted by Market & Opinion Research International) abortion came a lowly ninth on a list of ten issues that voters said had influenced their decision. A mere 3 per cent said it was the most important issue.

What is more, SPUC's campaign had no appreciable effect even on Catholics. MORI asked who had the best policy on abortion. The answers from Catholics were: Labour 20 per cent, Conservative 13 per cent, SNP 11 per cent, Others 5 per cent, Don't Know 51 per cent. Indeed, despite the ballyhoo, catholics were fractionally *more favourable* than non-catholics to the Labour candidate's abortion stand.

People can argue whether SPUC has the right views on abortion. People can also argue whether such an issue should sway a by-election result. The point here is not really about abortion at all. It is about the increasingly sophisticated use of opinion surveys. These are now yielding hard information in areas where guesswork by political pundits used to hold a jealous monopoly. Analysis is becoming almost as accessible as gossip. The implications for political journalism ought to be enormous. But whether many of our newspapers would actually prefer complex information to simple guesswork is, of course, another matter.

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Patrick Wintour: Dismantling Merseyside: the Collapse of Regional Policy

'Pick up a factory, the Invasion of Liverpool has begun', says a euphoric – and totally untrue – billboard not far from the city's town hall.

So far from there being any invasion, Merseyside this year has begun to acquire a reputation as the Bermuda Triangle of British industry. Business after business has disappeared, and scarcely a week goes by without news of further redundancies. Confronted with capitalism's decision to decamp, and confronted at the same time with a depressed local market, the Government's expensive regional programme provides no antidote. Indeed, the Merseyside experience suggests that regional policy, once celebrated in many a glossy brochure, is losing in practice whatever coherence it may once have possessed in theory.

Merseyside began the year with 11 per cent unemployment, and since then 8,500 sackings have been announced – 2,200 at Lucas; 460 at Bird's Eye in Kirkby, where the level of unemployment is already among the worst in Europe; 2,000 at Leyland's Speke No. 2 plant; 200 at Cammell Laird; 625 at Western Ship Repairers; 700 at GEC Consumer Products; 500 at Courtaulds; 500 at Spillers bakery in Walton; the list goes on to make up a Who's Who of British industry. Left behind after this exodus will be the largest concentration of young unemployed and long-term unemployed in Britain, an unassimilated black minority, an increasingly unskilled work-force, and teams of social scientists studying the wreckage.

One thing Liverpool is not short of is statistics. Just in the past year, the Liverpool Inner Area research team working for the Department of Environment, the Manpower Services Commission and the NEB have all produced major reports. At present both a parliamentary Select Committee on Employment and PA Consultants (working for the Department of Industry) are engaged in further studies. The Merseyside County Council admitted in *their* report that despite all this research and 'despite major efforts to diversify and attract new industry, the decline persists and may be intensifying'. The county council have just set up their own industrial development body with a £3m. budget as part of their design for 'a completely fresh approach'. But like statistics, institutions to promote development are not in short supply. As Eric Heffer has said, the problem at the moment is to co-ordinate them – for example, there are over 40 different sources of aid for Merseyside, ranging from selective assistance under the Industry Act to subsidised surveys of export markets.

When Engels described Manchester in 1844 he explained how, although the route from the prosperous villas in the suburbs to the commercial centre drove through some of the worst working class slums, a mask of respectability was presented to the wealthy commuter by an unbroken line of shops behind which hid the squalor. Liverpool's present day poverty by contrast stands unshielded – its characteristic expression old rooming houses, looking ready to collapse any moment, often standing isolated in tracks of wasteland. On the new estates, most of them unaesthetic mausoleums, vandalism is commonplace. Empty flats are plundered and stripped for piping and copper. Blocks are rapidly become hard to let: deserted, or populated by the unemployable, the people euphemistically described as the New Poor.

Advocacy of the inevitability and social instructiveness of unemployment thrives on Merseyside. At the Chamber of Commerce they talk of the need for a shake-out and still more unemployment: 'We must go through the trauma of transition in order to show to potential investors that acceptable manning levels and labour costs exist on Merseyside.'

Liverpool's working-class certainly has a militant reputation, to which James Callaghan added last month when he declared that 'industrial peace might remove the aura that surrounds Liverpool'. This is, however, an aura of a potentially misleading kind.

'The hopes of the sixties are only an embarrassing memory'

A recent Department of Employment survey shows that Liverpool, in spite of its heavy representation in strike-prone industries like cars and docks, comes only sixth in the strike-table of British cities – well behind Coventry, whose aura appears to be superior. Liverpool's reputation derives not from the quantity of disputes, but their political quality and the publicity they therefore attract. It was the Merseyside workers who began activity against the Pay Code in 1968, and the Industrial Relations Act three years later. The politicised disputes at Fisher Bendix, Pilkingtons, and at Halewood in 1969 are part of union folklore.

Things are rather the other way round just now: for managements appear to be capitalising on growing shop-floor demoralisation. At Bird's Eye, for example, an engineers' strike led to the sacking of 450 workers. When the whole factory came out in sympathy, the management felt sufficiently assured to dismiss the entire work-force. No-one faces the prospect of the Job Centre in Kirkby with any equanimity: tails between their legs, the unions returned, accepting the 450 redundancies, and in addition a nine-point productivity scheme. At Spillers the management felt themselves able to dispense with even the statutory three months notice of redundancy.

It is not as though a good industrial performance makes much difference. At Lucas Victor works, with the best industrial-relations record in the group, the company has refused to take any interest in the proposals for alternative work put by the shop-stewards' combine. In the case of GEC Sir Arnold Weinstock had already pared the Liverpool workforce down from 15,000 to 3,000 before he cut again because of the loss of an Electricity Board order for 70,000 cookers. Those who were dismissed had in the previous year doubled their productivity, to produce one cooker per man every seven hours. It is not easy to see that they could have done more, or that their industrial behaviour could have made much difference to another of the factory's underlying problems: namely, that the Ministry of Defence, anxious about public-spending cuts, sold off the land on which it stood to a Leeds developer. The developer then increased GEC's rent from £90,000 to £500,000. (Not, of course, that GEC is short of cash: It is in the process of dispersing millions to shareholders.)

So Merseyside's tradition of militancy is facing its severest test. The Liverpool Trades Council organised a conference two weeks ago to weld into shape a united opposition to the wave of sackings. But the TUC regional officer was conspicuous by his absence, and the meeting itself seemed parenthetic, even absurd: as when the Broad Left leadership, under challenge from the revolutionary Left, passed a motion calling for the nationalisation of the largest 200 companies in the country. 'How do you expect this government to nationalise 200 companies', thundered one of the dockers present, 'when it can't even keep a penny off the price of a loaf?'

No-one mentioned regional development policy. Eric Heffer told his constituents he had worn out the carpet lobbying the Department of Industry. 'Pressure' was the word of the day: through mass lobbies of Parliament, May Day demos, a one-day strike on 9 May, and a Right to Work march. But as one of the Leyland stewards admitted privately, it will be a hard task to get practical unity at shop-floor level.

The Speke car-workers' decision to resist closure of their plant may produce a change of mood. This is motivated in part by anger at Leyland's modest redundancy proposals – where something akin to the British Steel terms had been rather wishfully expected – and in part by a belief that mismanagement is largely to blame for Speke's misfortunes.

Supposedly Speke is the second most modern plant in the Leyland group, and if this is so remarkably little intelligent use has been made of it. Even with one line incomplete, its capacity is 100,000 cars a year. But between 1975 and 1977 only 69,000 cars were produced, the chief reason being

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that Leyland could not sell the hard-topped TRs which had been developed, inappropriately, for the American market.

Some of the stewards argue that Leyland, worried by over-production of the unsaleable TRs, made little effort to avoid the 17-week strike that preceded the decision to close Speke. Even though the plant was idle for some months of last year because of external disputes, this winter's internal dispute still left stockpiles of unsold cars in March. Certainly Leyland's approach to the strike was unusual; it was about manning levels, and the management refused to follow the procedural agreement under which temporary manning arrangements would normally have been worked on the 5 per cent of jobs which remained in dispute.

In spite of Government incentives to retain workers, the reality is that most companies are looking for ways of shedding labour, and Liverpool looks a relatively easy place to get away with it. Very few big companies have their headquarters on Merseyside, so there is little personal involvement by the controllers of corporate investment.

The traditional industries – docks, shipbuilding and ship repair – are in long-term decline, and this erodes much of the city's basic demand for labour. In the ten years up to 1975 Merseyside lost 69,000 jobs in transport, communications and construction: the industrial base has contracted so sharply that just 12 companies account for half of what employment remains.

The motor industry arrived reluctantly in the sixties, under one of Harold Macmillan's regional-development schemes, and that was seen at the time as a turn of the tide. But cars do not create the same 'ripple' effect throughout the local economy that the docks once did. And with Speke closing, Fords perhaps wishing to do the same, and with the European motor industry appealing for aid to the EEC, the hopes of the sixties are only an embarrassing memory.

Small businesses (highly favoured in the budget and much talked of in Liverpool) are at the centre of Peter Shore's Inner City Partnership scheme. Their attraction is that they let the Government present a vigorous-looking employment policy without having to be politically controversial. No-one, these days, is against small business. The problem is that 75 per cent of employment in Liverpool is multinational and most of the small businesses are dependent on these giant firms. Already attempts to bring this up at Mersey Partnership meetings are being freezed out for being 'too political'. Besides how can factories employing 400 people be a solution to a crisis of the scale which Merseyside is facing?

In some desperation the Council is now saying that service industries must be the answer, and adding angrily that the Government have not done enough to help. Only 150,000 sq. ft. of office space is available in Liverpool. Despite a dramatic increase in land prices, developers have shied away from employing Liverpool's construction workers. The local council are now preparing to intervene to the extent of paying the first two years' debt charges to a developer for any office that he builds which he then cannot lease. Though the Government pays regional grants to any company that moves *into* a development area, it does remarkably little to help indigenous service industry (of which Liverpool, due to the docks, once had a great deal in shipping and insurance). In the North-East, 80 per cent of the jobs created between 1960 and 1971 were in 'public administration'. But no such bonus has benefited Liverpool's way.

Even in the manufacturing sector, Liverpool is receiving less rather than more help. The excision of the Regional Employment Premium, abandoned to IMF in December 1976 with only six weeks' notice, has taken out £26m. from the area. That also symbolised the abandonment of an area-based policy in favour of a national industrial sector policy. Its loss means total exchequer expenditure on regional policy fell by more than half between 1976/77 and 1977/78: the consequence being the probable loss of 50,000 jobs in the development areas between now and 1980. The present national industrial strategy is now to select winners from the sector working parties and increase their export competitiveness through massively subsidising their investment. But in the nature of things there are not many winners on Merseyside for the sector working parties to spot.

'What has happened is that the Government has made the whole of Britain a development area'

Parallel to the abandonment of Regional Employment Premiums there has been a decline in the use of Industrial Development certificates to keep new factories out of already prosperous areas. Only 10 per cent of applications are now refused. The main emphasis of what is left of regional policy is now disproportionately on capital intensive industries. The Regional Development Grant, (much the largest arm of regional policy and worth £325m. in 1975/6 alone) gives a 22 per cent subsidy in Special Development Areas for investment in new machinery and factories. The more capital intensive a project, the larger the grant: thus a firm in Runcorn has actually recently reduced its labour force by half by modernising with the help of the RDG. In heavily capitalised industries the cost per job, in regional incentives, can be £10,000. To cite the most extreme example, the building of four large oil terminals creating 900 jobs will take up a half of the total UK expenditure on RDG in 1975-76, though the terminals would have gone to the development area regardless of any government assistance.

What has happened in the last five years is that the Government has made the whole of Britain a development area. Where before the justification of regional policy was largely economic – that it prevented overheating or the under-utilisation of resources and caused a net growth of jobs – the recession in Britain is now so general that many jobs attracted to a development area are at the cost of jobs elsewhere. So regional policy has now become a question of distribution rather than growth. The case for transferring jobs to Merseyside by for example refusing an IDC in the West Midlands is now politically difficult. It can only be argued through on the more egalitarian basis that a quarter of Liverpool's population is in supplementary benefit and that some of that poverty ought to be spread out across the country. Nobody else, however, can be expected to want it.

But with the Government committed to industries with a high net export content as the best means of avoiding further state intervention in the market, it is unlikely that Liverpool will receive anything more than minor palliatives. Regional policy will continue to be a response to levels of private investment (the NEB has made only four minor public investments on Merseyside since its inception). Liverpool's daunting housing problems (there is a backlog of 40,000 repairs in the Council's stock of 78,000 dwellings) will not be patched up with an annual budget of £36m. roughly halved since 1974/5. Nor will the 52,000 young people on the dole in Merseyside receive that much help from the Manpower Services Commission. According to one local MP, Eddie Loyden, 'youngsters are either busy developing a sub-culture which does not expect work or else they are busy being trained for the dole by the MSC'.

But perhaps the most frightening thought of all is that Liverpool's youth unemployment may be a vision of the future. According to the latest EEC figures, the Nine's economies must grow by 5 per cent a year until 1982 to keep unemployment at its present level of 5.7 per cent. The EEC will have 8 per cent unemployed if it achieves 3¼ per cent growth. At present we are below 2 per cent. The invasion of Liverpool is going to be a long time coming.

Brian Wilson

The SNP: a Bandwagon in Disrepair

The art of psychological oneupmanship has been crucial to the progress of the Scottish National Party. They have succeeded throughout the past decade in looking like winners. Anyone who joined them seemed to be booking a place on the escalator that would carry them all the way to independence.

Suspicions, mounting in recent months, that the elevator might have broken down have now been confirmed. The SNP went into the Garscadden by-election campaign with supreme confidence and emerged with a miserable 3.6 per cent swing, that left them 4,552 votes behind Labour. Even more serious for them were the opinion polls, taken before Garscadden and published after the result had been declared. For the first time since the SNP became a force in the land, there were predictions that they would be losing seats instead of gaining them.

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Other parties, with longer pedigrees, are used to the vagaries of by-elections and opinion polls. But this is a new experience for the SNP and nobody yet knows how well equipped they are to react to it.

Right at the outset of the Garscadden campaign, the SNP candidate Keith Bovey said that independence would not be a prime issue because it was an abstraction. His opponent used this remark against him, but it was in fact a fair and honest observation. It was Mr Bovey's view that the Garscadden electorate would have unemployment and prices uppermost on their minds – and that they would cast their votes for the SNP because they would see independence as the best potential solution for these problems.

The poll conducted by Bob Worcester's Market and Opinion Research International (MORI), both in Garscadden and throughout Scotland, would appear to bear out the first part of that theory. The issues which preoccupy the Scottish electorate are unemployment, prices, vandalism, housing, education, taxes and wages (in that order). But the problem which Mr Bovey did not recognise, and which the SNP now faces, is that, even among their own supporters, there is a surprisingly low level of confidence in the SNP's ability to produce specific, effective answers.

On the other hand, there is a substantial demand for the 'abstraction' of constitutional change. Twenty-two per cent of the Scottish electorate regard the creation of an assembly or parliament in Edinburgh as an important issue, according to MORI. But the remainder are insufficiently impressed with the available evidence to accept that the SNP have the answers on the more conventional social and economic issues. Thus the SNP is still seen largely as a one-issue party.

Even with Scottish unemployment standing at 190,000, 36 per cent of the electorate think that Labour are best equipped to deal with the problem. Even the Tories (25 per cent) command more credibility than the SNP (18 per cent) on this issue. Much the same story emerges on housing and prices, from the MORI poll.

Why have the SNP failed so markedly to break through the credibility barrier? One of their more recent problems is that they now have a track record both in national and local government. In Garscadden, the Labour Party was able to produce a litany of examples of how Nationalist actions have not matched their words. A few years ago, for instance, the SNP could have posed more credibly as protectors of jobs on the Clyde. But it is now a matter of record that they voted with the Tories against the shipbuilding bill. Even worse, their MPs publicly tore up telegrams from Clydeside shop stewards, asking them to change their minds. In the eyes of Yarrow shipyard workers, vague guarantees of oil wealth do not cancel out these hard facts.

At the lower end of the political scale, the SNP exploited – with apparent justification – the deplorable housing and environmental conditions in large parts of Drumchapel housing estate which forms a large part of Garscadden constituency. Labour promptly put out a special leaflet pointing out that SNP members on Glasgow District Council voted against a proposal to allocate £100,000 for back court improvements in Drumchapel. For the first time, then, the SNP is coming up against the problem of accountability – and on that basis it appears to be faring rather badly.

It is far too soon to talk about the decline of the SNP. They have had an extraordinary stroke of luck in being presented with a by-election in Hamilton, which is likely to take place on the last Thursday in June. Even after Garscadden, the SNP will start odds-on favourites to win a seat that they have held before, where Mrs Margo Macdonald is their candidate and where a swing of just 4.3 per cent would give them victory. The hullabaloo which would inevitably accompany Mrs Macdonald's return to Parliament could, in the short-term at least, give the SNP a new lease of life.

If, however, the polls are justified at a general election and the SNP fails to make the advances it has been anticipating, then the political atmosphere in Scotland could become even less pleasant than it has been over the past few years. It is unlikely that the SNP could hold together as a unit, if it seemed that the prospect of winning a majority of Scottish seats was receding into the dim and distant future.

Already there are hawks and doves within the party. At their 1976 conference Douglas Henderson, the right-wing MP for East Aberdeenshire, came close to beating the leadership with a demand that there should be no truck with devolution as a stepping-stone to independence. In the mid-fifties, Mr Henderson was expelled from the SNP for his anti-English outpourings and formed his own short-lived nationalist party of Scotland, before departing for South Africa. There is a strong residual belief within the SNP that independence will never be won through a Westminster parliament, and if the prize appears to be slipping away then that school of thought is bound to gain greater prominence.

The SNP pin many of their hopes on younger voters, who have grown up to take the Nationalist presence on the political scene for granted, and who lack the strong class allegiances of their parents. In this connection, the MORI poll offers them marginal encouragement, while the SNP has 27 per cent support among the Scottish electorate as a whole this rises to 34 per cent in the 18-34 age group. Even that is a less formidable figure than their opponents might have feared.

Ian Black: Begin's War and the Revival of the PLO

Although the shooting war is just about over in South Lebanon, Israel's invasion last month has left a lot of loose ends to be tied up. And even when UN troops complete their deployment and take over positions now occupied by Israel, there is no guarantee of anything more than the most fragile of armed truces.

One striking fact about the first large scale clash since 1973 is that, like the First World War, it took so long to break out. One major reason for delay was that Israeli defence minister Ezer Weizman, together with chief of staff Mordecmai Gur, suspected that the Lebanese Christians might provoke clashes with the PLO sufficiently serious to drag Israel into an unwanted confrontation with Syrian army.

It was not long before it transpired that whatever was going to happen in South Lebanon as a result of the invasion it would be far from a knockout blow to the PLO. Despite their much vaunted 'body count' the Israelis have been forced to admit that the PLO infrastructure remains virtually untouched. One higher echelon commander, it is true, was reported killed, but he belonged to George Habash's breakaway PFLP whose relations with the PLO are tenuous and strained. Reports of hand to hand fighting between Israeli troops and PLO men notwithstanding, it is clear that Israel's loss of the element of surprise in the attack assured the escape of the vast majority of the 6,000 Palestinian fighters estimated to be in the area.

But even with the 'optimistic' figure of 250-400 PLO dead, no-one has dared to calculate the effects of the political damage and the moral opprobrium caused by the flight of some 200,000 refugees from the south, the destruction of scores of villages and the death of over a thousand innocent civilians.

A statement issued by the Israeli army spokesman on 31 March reveals a fairly clear-cut attitude to the question of civilian casualties. The air and artillery 'softening up' barrage that preceded the invasion was designed to reduce Israeli casualties to a minimum. "Today', the statement said, 'it is clear to all Lebanese citizens that if they want to live in peace . . . they must take the initiative into their own hands and drive the terrorists out of their country. Only then will the suffering cease. So much for the people who Israel was supposedly protecting from the depredations of the PLO.

Israelis saw a different war from the one reported in the rest of the world. They saw a war whose screenplay might have been written by Kurt Vonnegut, a war where nearly everything was beautiful and nothing hurt. There were pictures of Christian villagers greeting the Israeli army, regular reports on the number of refugees *returning* to the south, to the brand new houses built for them by the Israeli troops the moment the guns stopped firing. While the civilian dead were hauled out of the rubble of their homes and buried in mass graves the papers here were full of pictures of the reconstruction operation in full swing. It might have been the peace corps in action.

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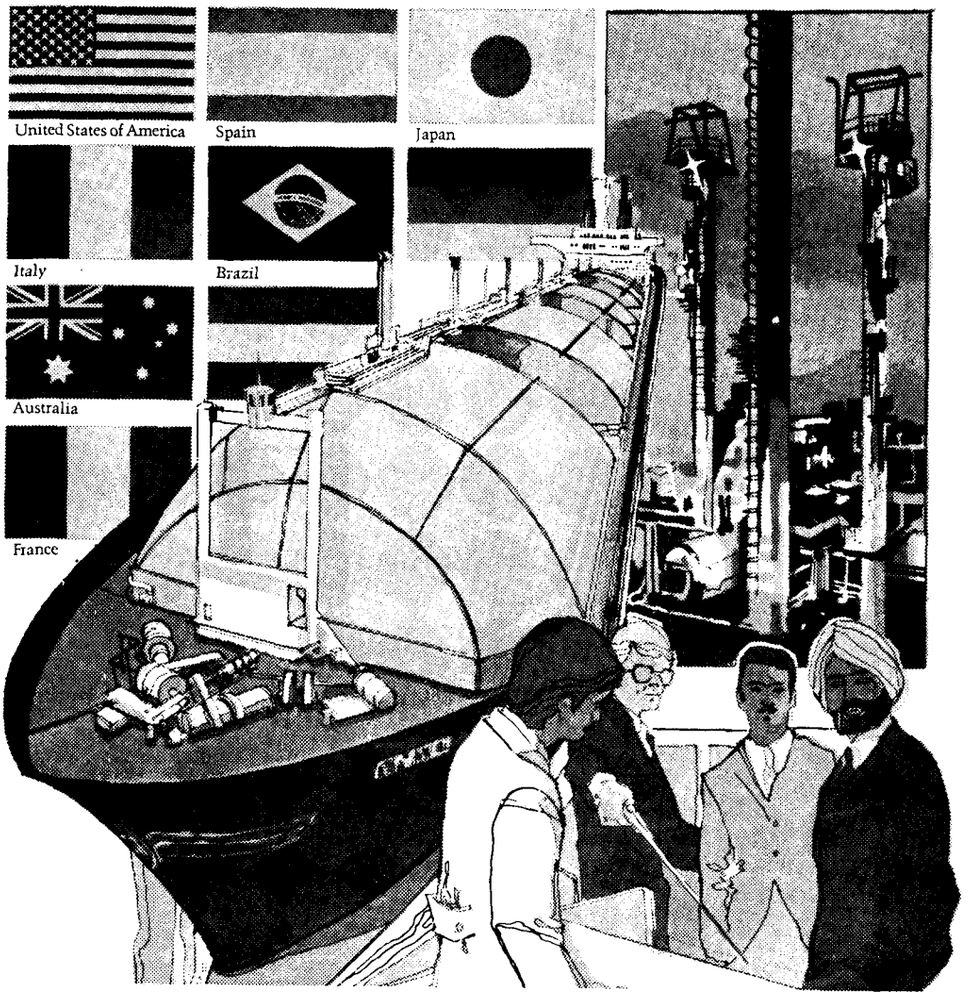

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There were disquieting rumours of course. Everyone had a friend or relation serving in Lebanon and some people knew from the foreign press and radio that not everything was smiles and rehabilitation. A ten day radio and TV strike, with only the carefully censored army radio station broadcasting kept public knowledge of the aftermath of the Litani war down to a minimum.

When the TV came back on the air it did its bit by omitting to broadcast a speech by PLO leader Yasser Arafat widely covered elsewhere in which he called for peace moves on the basis of last year's Soviet-American joint declaration, which recognises Israel's right to sovereignty and security. Instead viewers saw a vindication of their government's action in a long report of a speech by PFLP leader George Habash, who denies Israeli's right to exist.

The PLO – apart from its few hundred dead – did better than its leaders could possibly have hoped out of the Litani war. Even the Israeli chief of staff was forced to acknowledge that the 'terrorists' would now be a party to any future accord in Lebanon.

The first Israeli soldier ever was captured by the PLO and is reportedly to be put 'on trial' in Beirut. There were massive demonstrations of support for the PLO in the occupied West Bank and the Palestinian organisation's drooping prestige, which took a heavy battering from the Egyptians following the recent murder of journalist Youssef Siba'ei and the subsequent Larnaca shoot-out, soared to new heights. The Palestinian David had fought valiantly against the Israeli Goliath. In his worst nightmares Menachem Begin could hardly have foreseen Yasser Arafat conferring with UN commanders over cease-fire arrangements in South Lebanon.

Despite much-publicised attempts to create a new Lebanese army to maintain order in the south, Major Haddad's recruiting campaign amongst the Shi'ite Moslem villagers – who form 70 per cent of the South Lebanese population – has proved a dismal failure. Although they suffered badly at the hands of the PLO, the Shi'ite's hatred for the Christians – buttressed by recent looting and revenge in Moslem villages – knows no bounds, and the Israelis now find themselves in the embarrassing position of being the proctector of two groups which hate each other as much, if not more than they hate the PLO.

In the last two weeks Israel has begun to hand over its positions to Unifil (UN Interim Force In Lebanon) contingents but has made sure that its reluctance and misgivings in doing so have been duly noted. Although the Christians have been rebuked by Israel for their venegeful excesses there are rumours that their attempted obstruction of the development of UN forces may have been suggested further south. In the long run though, if Mr Waldheim has his way – and he has already been to Jerusalem to hurry things up – Israel will have no choice but to allow itself to be replaced by the UN, although its insistence on optimum UN deployment may lead to a fairly long Israeli stay and some complex wrangling.

The Americans, who were almost certainly informed in advance of the planned Israeli attack – though not, it seems, of its extent or of the use of the controversial cluster bombs – were quick to make reparations for the despatch of a UN force to Lebanon. The visit to Haifa of the Sixth Fleet's giant aircraft carrier US Nimtz (closely followed by a planeload of Italian prostitutes on standby in case the local talent wasn't enough) was a timely reminder to all concerned that if Unifil couldn't stop PLO infiltration then Israel had a powerful friend. With all the good will in the world it does seem unlikely that Unifil will prove effective on this score (Israel newsmen revelled in asking UN troops how they would spot a PLO man) and even less likely Americans will be able to do anything about it. The Syrians, who – if their Arab solidarity was anything more than mere sloganising – might have been expected to react to the Israeli invasion of neighbouring Lebanon, kept their noses very clean and made do with warning sternly that it would be they, and not Israel, who would decide when the next war would take place. Israel, for its part, was conspicuously careful to avoid any clash with Syrian troops in Lebanon, and there are now reasons to believe that the way may be open to Syrian cooperation in restraining the PLO.

Although you never can tell, it doesn't look as though the Litani war is going to be painted in very glorious colours in the future annals of fighting Zion. But more is on the way. The operation is already being described here as a model for further 'small wars' which end in partial settlements. 'such operations,' one political commentator wrote optimistically, 'do not solve problems but do prevent their exacerbation or explosion and create a better basis for their continued handling.'

Observers of the Middle East tend to have selective memories, and when assessing Israeli's fruitless and costly Lebanese adventure they would do well to recall that it was launched by an incompetent and frustrated government which was shown, along with its other shortcomings, to be unable to protect its citizens from sudden, violent death. Yet northern Israel is still within PLO rocket range from north of the Litani river, beyond the UN troops, beyond any possible 'security belt' and terror can strike again. South Lebanon has bled liberally, but political solutions seem as remote as ever. The war continues.

Roger Boyes

New Types of Solidarity

Most of the dissent in the Soviet Union that is known in the West comes from intellectuals. But there are also working class dissidents. Two hundred of them have joined a dissident trade union group, the Association of Free Trade Unions, and now they are beginning to get support in the West.

Support from the Left, at that. Eric Heffer plans to raise the case of the AFTU at the Labour Party national executive meeting on Wednesday. He believes that Western support for working class/dissent in the Soviet Union must come from the Left. He believes that it is important to demonstrate that the Left, which has regularly opposed violations of human rights in Chile and South Africa should also speak out about the treatment of Soviet dissidents.

The AFTU has not so far shown the skill that the intellectual dissidents have shown in winning publicity in the West – publicity that has given them a certain immunity from arrest.

There is another important difference from the intellectual dissenters: the members of the AFTU are overwhelmingly Socialists. They have no wish to emigrate or even to uproot the Communist Party's control in the Soviet Union. Their aim is simply to get a fair deal for workers.

The most articulate of them is Vladimir Klebanov, a former miner. He worked for 16 years at the Zazhanova coal mine in the Donbas, where he says that to fulfil unrealistically high production norms, miners often have to work 12 hours a day. The resulting fatigue, he claims, increased the accident rate in his mine so that 12-15 deaths and up to 70 injuries a year were considered normal.

In 1968, as a shift supervisor, he refused to send miners to the pitface with faulty safety equipment and to agree to management demands for excessive overtime. He was dismissed and soon afterwards confined to a mental hospital for four years. Later, he was unable to find work because the damning phrase, 'dismissed in connection with arrest' was stamped in his papers. On January 26 this year he announced the formation of an unofficial trade union to protect workers. At the end of February, he was reportedly back in a Donetsk psychiatric hospital 'for observation.'

A certain strand of what perhaps has to be called naive outrage runs through the stories of the men and women who have joined AFTU. One typical one is that of a waitress who lost her job in Volgagrad because she complained that the management were stealing crockery and logging it as 'breakages.'

AFTU can claim 200 members and many more supporters after only three months of existence. But it is hardly likely to grow into a mass movement, partly because of this very puritan streak. Most Soviet workers have given up any hope of achieving change by direct action. The usual methods of putting pressure on management are techniques of collective stealth that are probably almost as much anathema to AFTU members as corruption in management and Party: secret slow-downs, for example, or truancy.

The dissidents received a blow, though hardly a surprising one, last week, when the International Labour Organization refused to recognise them. But in Britain, largely as a result of lobbying by Amnesty International, trade unionists are beginning to realise that Soviet dissidents are not all middle class intellectuals. The AUEW has already written to President Brezhnev, expressing concern at the group's treatment.

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Drawings by Richard Willson: above, Mr Vyas amid the lawyers; overleaf, Mr Justice Slade, and Dr George Brosan

Tim Albert: Anatomy of a Polytechnic: the Underside of Higher Education

It is easy to assume that institutions of higher education conduct their business on a rather higher plane than others. After all – or so we are led to believe – they are staffed with highly qualified people, operate through a complex structure of democratic procedures and ostensibly are dedicated not to the nastinesses of making money, but to such noble ideals as truth and the pursuit of knowledge.

However, a lengthy, expensive and largely unnecessary court case which has been unwinding in the High Court over the past few weeks has given the public a rare glimpse of the inner workings of one London polytechnic. And as the William Tyndale enquiry demonstrated about schools, the reality tends to be rather different from the broadcast image. Indeed the picture painted during this particular case seemed to owe more to Mayor Daley's Chicago than Plato's Republic – a world of agreements ignored and of procedures bypassed, of political bullying and uniformed decision making, of unresolved conflicts allowed to reach dangerous proportions by the managements.

The case, which opened on April 14, arises from a dispute over control of admissions to a social work training course run by the North East London Polytechnic but validated by a national body, the Central Council for Education and training in Social Work (CCETSW). The case was brought by CCETSW; the principal group of defendants include the three boroughs who through a Joint Education Committee finance the polytechnic (Newham, Barking and Waltham Forest), the chairman of that committee (Councillor Peter Leighton of Waltham Forest), the chairman of the polytechnic's governors (Alderman Arthur Edwards of Newham), and the director of the polytechnic (Dr George Brosan). Also represented are the former admissions tutor on the course, (Mr Ian Pearce), one of the current students (Mrs Jeannie Hughes), and Mr Suresh Vyas, an education and welfare officer with Newham Council whose triple attempts to get onto the course triggered off the whole affair.

That it got so far, in spite of several last minute attempts to agree an out of court settlement, will doubtless prove to have been a costly mistake. One of the first things to have emerged was the extraordinary lengths to which Newham Council was prepared to go to ensure that its employee, Mr Vyas, should get onto the social work course – even though those responsible for admissions (and approved as such by CCETSW), the course tutors, persistently said he was not suitable.

In 1975 the polytechnic director was forced personally to enrol the young man in the face of opposition from students and staff. (He was later withdrawn because of the opposition). In 1976 Newham education committee voted to withdraw from the estimates the cost of the social work course, while the director withdrew the powers of the head of department. (This was later resolved when an agreement was reached to have a few 'closed' places for suitable education welfare officers from the three London boroughs). And in 1977, when Mr Vyas had been rejected for the third time, Newham councillors and officers persuaded

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the joint education committee to cancel the course, even though it was due to start in only a few months time.

This action led to the directorate again trying to enrol Mr Vyas straight onto the course, against the wishes of tutor-selectors and students. And it was this that led CCETSW – somewhat late in the day – to seek a legal solution. As Miss Priscilla Young, its director, told the court:

> If it were possible for students to be selected for social work courses without the procedures being followed there would be no point in having accreditation of courses of approved rules.

But some of the most disturbing things to have emerged from the hearing were the unsatisfactory manner in which the joint education committee decision to cancel the course was taken; the fact that this decision was only intended as a political threat, and hardly expected to be implemented; and that, as the committee and its chairman later acknowledged, it was the wrong decision anyway.

Councillor Leighton, who had chaired that meeting, told the court that the motion to shut down the course and start sacking the staff had been passed by only one vote. The alternative, which had called for 'independent mediation and assessment', had been rejected mainly on the grounds that, whether or not Mr Vyas had been the victim of an injustice, nevertheless the social work 'grapevine' had already been at work, ensuring that he would find it difficult to get onto another course.

Where did this information come from, counsel for the students asked during cross examination? 'It's fair to say,' said Councillor Leighton, 'that one of the members of Newham authority was involved in the administrative side of social work and he knew something of the way in which social workers operate and the way in which information was passed around – but beyond that I don't know the source for that.' Enter Rumour, painted full of tongues.

On another occasion Mr Gerald Godfrey QC, for CCETSW, asked whether the attention of the joint education committee had been drawn to the rules under which admission to social-work courses is regulated. These, remarkably enough, are laid down by the Privy Council, but this was a constitutional complexity which had passed Cllr Leighton by. All he could say was that he thought the 'Central Council' must have been involved in some way – but by this, it

turned out, he meant CCETSW itself. When Mr Godfrey referred to a list of criteria drawn up by the social work tutors to regulate admissions, Cllr Leighton confessed that the education committee had never been aware of their existence.

One potentially invaluable resource was actually at the crucial meeting but the committee wasn't interested. Mr Pearce, the admissions tutor, along with some other members of staff, had taken the trouble to turn up to the meeting and see democracy at work, only to be rewarded with the sight of the committee promptly going into secret session. Fortunately, perhaps, he didn't hear the polytechnic director identifying him as the young man who was 'the cause of all this trouble'.

Councillor Leighton admitted that they only heard one side of the story. 'But you know that's often the case. We have to accept the view of our officers . . . If we didn't do that we wouldn't be able to do anything.'

But Leighton did make it clear that he hadn't supported the motion, believing it 'a sledgehammer to crack a nut'. He said it had only been intended to apply pressure (presumably on CCETSW to relax its rules so that Mr Vyas could get onto the course) and that he hadn't actually expected it to take the course that it had done. Under cross examination he admitted that the decision had been wrong. 'I accept that the resolution seeking to close the course for that year in the form that it was taken should not have been put,' he said.

So why was it? The most reasonable answer seems to be that it was the effect of one or two or more forceful personalities who took up the case and forced it into areas into which it was unwise to go. One of these was Dr Brosan, director of the polytechnic, whose testimony to the joint education committee, according to Leighton, was highly influential. Another clearly was Alderman Arthur Edwards, described by Stephen Sedley, for the social work students, as the 'Godfather' in the whole affair.

Certainly Edwards, a science adviser with Redbridge Council, member of Newham education committee, vice chairman of Newham policy and resources committee, and chairman of the polytechnic's governors, played a key role throughout. In 1976, for example, it was he who proposed that funds for the social work course should be withheld, and it was he in 1977 who proposed that the course be shut down. Unfortunately the court (and the ratepayers of Newham) were unable to get a clear view of his involvement, since he declined to submit an affidavit, thereby avoiding having to give evidence. One of the most shameful aspects of this whole affair, therefore, is that, though the paid employees are made to parade their activities through the court, the politician who employed them has avoided the limelight.

Poor Dr Brosan was not so lucky. He was on the witness stand for the best part of a day, and gave the impression of a man whose exaggerated confidence in his own competence and propensity to by-pass proper procedures, had inflamed the conflict when Dr Brosan imagined himself to be cooling it down.

He adopted a hectoring tone under cross examination, and on occasions rashly tried to outsmart the counsel. At one time, after he had offered rather patronisingly, to expound at length, an icy Gerald Godfrey rebuked him: 'At the moment I don't want you to do anything, much less at length, except answer the questions I put to you'. On other occasions it emerged that Brosan, an electrical engineer, had little sympathy with the social work course and its staff. He quibbled with counsel about calling the staff presumptuous: 'No, that would mean that they know what they are doing.'

He declared at one stage that the standard on the social work course was much lower than on engineering courses, and at one stage naively embarked on an exposition of how interview bias could be avoided by using psychological questionnaires. The latter were, he commented, 'more perceptive than the human brain.'

He also allowed himself rather unnecessary criticism of his employee, Mr Pearce. 'I had met him on a number of occasions. I was not impressed by his behaviour and by his attitudes, and if you want me to quantify that I will do so with pleasure.' He was asked to elaborate, and he told of a meeting with Mr Pearce at a social function, where the conversation came round to the Vyas affair. 'At this stage Mr Pearce seemed to indicate to me the attitudes of those types of professionality with which I disagree. That is to say choosing people who were in his view the correct mould and the correct mould is very much like Mr Pearce.'

And he continued: 'One of the most difficult things that I have had to endeavour to do in the polytechnic – and I have obviously not been wholly successful – is to try to get some sort of change going. Where there is in my view resistance to change this constitutes an unsatisfactory future.'

He made much of what he called his own

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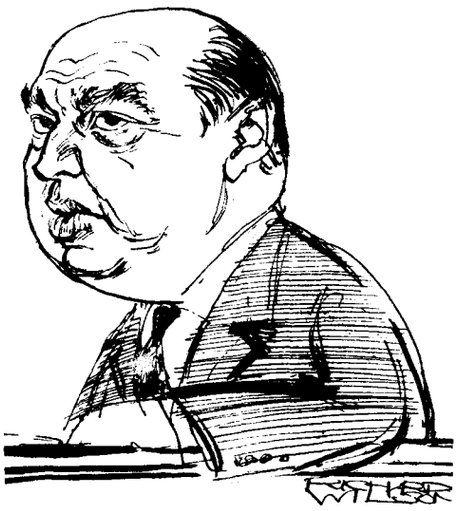
'educational leadership'. This appears to have encouraged him to see himself as a one-man ACAS, seeking to settle problems quietly in a 'common sense' way.

This frequently led him to unorthodox actions. At one stage he picked up the phone to try to get Mr Vyas admitted to a similar course at the neighbouring Polytechnic of North London (to their credit they wouldn't wear it), and on another occasion suggested that Mr Vyas should be admitted at the start of the course, because he could always be failed at the end.



Dr George Brosan, director of the North-East London Polytechnic, opposite, Mr Justice Slade.

His evidence also revealed that on at least two occasions he managed the difficult feat of facing in both directions at once. In the autumn of 1977 he told the students that he had wanted the course to go ahead, though evidence from Leighton showed that only a few months before he had been active in persuading the joint education committee to shut it down. On the second occasion, the Judge spotted the contradiction, and Brosan's attempt to extricate himself brought some exquisite contortions.

> Mr Justice Slade: You told Mr Vyas you disagreed with CCETSW. But in the letter to the council CCETSW the previous day I can't see any disagreement at all.
> Dr Brosan: In the formal sense there is no disagreement. If one goes strictly by the agreement then there is no basis for disagreement. However there is a basis for disagreement on the validity of the procedure by which the formal requirements of the council were fulfilled.

It was hardly a picture of open government, but worst of all it patently didn't work. Although he made much of what he called his 'political antennae', at the crucial time when the social workers' tutors were discussing how best to deal with Mr Vyas's third application, he knew nothing of what was going on.

Furthermore, the events that followed from the July resolution of the Joint Education Committee must also be taken as an indictment of the management of the polytechnic. On the day after the meeting, Dr Brosan went on a month's holiday, leaving the pieces to be picked up by the deputy director (shortly to move to a polytechnic of his own) and the vice chairman of the Academic Board. Mr William Wilson. It was clear from his testimony that Mr Wilson, a mild and well-meaning man, who thought the resolution to shut down the course had been outrageous, nevertheless felt himself pressurised to make some kind of decision. He did not have adequate information ('I am not sure that I had a clear idea as to what my responsibilities to CCETSW were' he said), and yet he decided that Vyas should be admitted to the course. Mr John Macdonald, QC for the polytechnic, did not seek to defend it.

The whole series of events was a complete shambles, and bad management must be largely to blame. Even the bland language of British justice failed to mask this. 'My clients accept that they have not been without fault in this unhappy history,' said Macdonald.

Instead he made much of the polytechnic's concern that Mr Vyas may not have been properly treated, and that there was some doubt as to whether the 1977 interview had been properly carried out. Mr Pearce, the admissions tutor who carried out the interview, had been one of the leading protestors in 1975, and in 1977 upset Mr Vyas by referring to those previous events. This meant that Mr Vyas gave a bad performance in both this interview and in a subsequent group interview, he argued.

The lengthy explanations from Mr Pearce, whose obvious sincerity tended to turn cross examination into self-examination, did allow some room for doubt that, however well intentioned, he had been, justice may not have been met. But it was conceded that he acted in good faith: he explained that he carried out the interview himself because the previous year an independent interviewer had complained that he had been involved, and that he thought it only proper to air feelings about the previous events.

As Stephen Sedley for the students pointed out, anybody who conducted the interview in 1977 would have been in an impossible position. The failure here – yet again – seems to be that of management which knowingly or not allowed him to be put in such a position.

At the time of going to press, judgement (which is expected to clarify whether Mr Vyas is on the current course, and if that course should be CCETSW-recognised) has not been given. But whichever way it goes it is clear that considerable damage has already been done. Mr Pearce has resigned, and Mr Vyas's chances of taking a social work course look somewhat slim. Relations between the polytechnic and the CCETSW may be such that the course is doomed. Many thousands of pounds of public money have been spent on a case that has shown the polytechnic system in a particularly unfavourable light.

At one stage Dr Brosan told the court 'My function is to try to make the system operate, and not seize up,' but this he manifestly failed to do. One would hope, first of all, that both he and Alderman Edwards have over the past two weeks been worrying about whether they should resign, and secondly that no more such revelations from other polytechnics are about to burst upon our legal system.

David Leitch

Racial Politics in Australia's Deep North

In the middle 1970s a settlement of some 800 aborigines doing nobody any harm at Aurukun on the northern end of Australia's remote Cape York Peninsula received a rare visit. The intruders represented an American mining and development outfit, the Tipperary Land Corp, and, shortly after they left, the news filtered back that the Aurukuns were sitting on a fortune.

The thick red mud-flats, out of which they and their ancestors had for thousands of years found just enough to support life and ensure its continuance, was now seen to be a source of unbelievable wealth. The boys from Tipperary had found a bauxite deposit and valued it at a cool $US one billion.

Whatever they thought about the bonanza – and the Aurukuns say they were not consulted – the Queensland Government in Brisbane were delighted. Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen wasted no time giving Tipperary the go-ahead. When the contract was drawn up the Aurukuns were marked down for a princely three per cent of the mining profits.

This is when the trouble started. The Aurukuns were advised to appeal against the decision to the Privy Council – the decision went against them early this year. Almost immediately after this judgement the Queensland government decided to run their tight ship even tighter, and claiming that the Aurukuns were incapable of running their own internal settlement affairs, the government announced that henceforth they would take over the reserve.

Anywhere else in Australia the Aurukuns would have title to their land. However, these matters are ordered differently in Queensland. Given the kind of regime which has evolved there after ten years of dictatorial government under the eccentric hand of Premier 'Joh' the Aurukuns might well have done better to settle for the three per cent.

Queensland aboriginals on reserves are subjected to police regulations governing access to the area, rights of inspection and even curfews which opponents claim gives

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Australia's 'deep north' the authentic racial patina of South Africa or Rhodesia.

It is the kind of unregenerate free-enterprise society which attracts freebooters and nostalgics of motley provenance. After Papue-New Guinea became independent a lot of retired Australian colonialists decided to see their days out in 'the sunshine state'. Former African colonialists have also been attracted by the unique climate, one that is not merely a question of weather but extends to matters like the absence of death duties and even the inimitable Queensland sense of humour.

There was a fine example last week when that heart-warming body of men, the Australian mining association, met for the annual dinner in Canberra. The mining industry is much bothered by the way that – outside Queensland at any rate – land rights legislation has given aborigines and their advisors power over prospective operations, an issue which is particularly acute in the northern territory.

Given these irking restrictions, a joke told by one of 'Joh's' ministers was particularly well received. Its punch line involved a Queenslander on the floor of an outback bar discovering his partner was a gorilla – and not 'a black in a fur-coat'. 'Joh' himself enraged Labour's one time Federal prime minister Gough Whitlam so thoroughly that Whitlam called him 'a nauseating bigot' and a 'bible bashing bastard'. Soon afterwards 'Joh' got his revenge by playing a crucial part in the constitutional impasse which led to the fall of Labour in Australia, an event some observers believe has condemned the country to a decade of reaction under prime minister Malcolm Fraser.

To the mining industry's distress, aboriginal rights have been an issue over which Fraser has adopted an unusually progressive stance. Thus the Aurukuns, disappointed by the Privy Council and now under fire from 'Joh's' boys, were advised to appeal to Fraser himself.

Much good it did them. Fraser promptly stated that the issue – 'the need for aboriginals on reserves to manage their own affairs like other Australians' – was important enough to warrant emergency federal legislation. Scarcely had it been passed, when 'Joh' used a Queensland legal tactic which blocked the new federal powers by making the Aurukuns' reserve crown land, and thus state controlled. Observers claimed that here was the most important Federal-State clash in years, but it was quickly resolved by 'a compromise' between 'Joh' and Fraser which was thought to save everyone's face.

Except, yet again, it transpired that the Aurukuns had not been consulted. So apart from a lot of lawyers whistling on their way to the bank no one is happy.

'Joh' has emerged from the affair less harmed than Fraser, but at 68 there are those, including his wife 'Flo', who think he should quit while he is still ahead. He recently alienated the state's medical association by promoting a cancer-cure specialist, a Czech called Vlastimil Brych, in the face of medical opposition which grew increasingly impassioned when it emerged that the cancer healer had been prevented from practising in New Zealand and was not, as he claimed, a graduate of Brno University's faculty of medicine.

Although 'Joh' has demonstrated that he is still swift enough on his pins to see off Federal Prime Ministers, whatever their political hue, Queensland-watchers reckon he should never have risked taking on the state's doctors, who have always backed him. In local parlance they say he is suffering 'a touch of the meggoes'. Even worse, they point out, the megalomania has extended to making enemies within the church as well. He had a group of Brisbane radical christians arrested for holding a march, in contravention of local laws, and the Aurukun affair has deeply offended the Presbyterian church which has been the driving force in the reserve since it was set up the best part of eighty years ago.

The Aurukuns' future is even more equivocal than the premier's. They have found no legal redress against the Tipperary carve-up, and paradoxically their advisers have done them a disservice. The aborigines have now incurred both the enmity and perhaps even worse, the *attention* of the Brisbane government. For as in so many stories in Australia, the factor of distance is crucial. No wonder the Aurukun leaders are so distressed. There was a time when their remoteness guaranteed a continuance of sameness, the peace for a man to fish, hunt wallabies and generally keep going in his own way. Now they fear – and they are very likely right – that things are never going to be the same up there any more.

Christopher Hitchens

'Rivers of Blood' — Enoch Powell Ten Years Later

A whole decade has gone by since Enoch Powell first attempted to communicate his paranoia to the rest of us. Hard, now, to recall the hysteria of the time. With dockers and meat-porters marching in his support, to the double felt revulsion of middle-class liberals, the whole post-war consensus on race seemed to have collapsed overnight. There were dire premonitions of fascism and demagogy on the Left, and panicky squeals about over-colourful language from bishops and *bien-pensants*. Yet the lapse of ten years has left Powell an oddly diminished figure. Even his greatest triumph – the probable difference that he made to the 1970 election result – turned into his greatest defeat and left him isolated from his natural supporters. And now his position in the bestiary of Northern Irish politics is looking rather tenuous as well. Many things are noticeably different for the interventions of Powell, and none of them for the better. But his record as an entirety has been a failure which few people would have pictured in 1968.

The term 'paranoia' has often been abused in politics, and needs to be separated from its clinical connotations. In his famous essay *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, Richard Hofstadter begins by saying: 'I call it paranoid style because no other word adequately evokes the qualities of heated exaggeration, suspiciousness and conspiratorial fantasy that I have in mind.' Those qualities are indeed the qualities of Powellism and of Powell. Used efficiently at the aptly judged moment, they can do two things. The first is to create or exploit a sense of frustration and anger among the less-advantaged members of society, and to offer them an explanation and a solution in the form of a scapegoat. Sometimes the scapegoat is a minority, sometimes it is an alleged conspiracy at the head of affairs. Sometimes, as in the case of Powell and Wallace, it is both.

The second is to create some kind of loss of nerve in the upper echelons that will lead to concessions being made, or even a surrender being offered. Powell had a short-term success with the first tactic, and certainly won some secret sympathisers in the second category. But he failed entirely to start the requisite stampede, and ever since then his tactics have borne the marks of desperation.

Nor is he the man of steely persistence that even some of his opponents fear he may be. An example. Not long after his campaign of racial politics began, he brought suit against the *Sunday Times* for editorial comments which he claimed were libellous.

They had said that he did not want to see race relations improve, and that he was 'spouting the fantasies of racial purity'. A group of reporters found an alarming number of respectable immigrants who were ready to sign or had signed affidavits about maltreatment and persecution at the hands of people inspired by Powell, and they felt it improbable that Powell had no idea of what effect he was having. They also suspected that Mr Powell could not prove the existence of the famous old lady who had allegedly written to him about immigrants pushing excrement through her letter-box, and who could not be found by the best efforts of the national press. In an effort to show that Powell's postbag could help with the point, and also settle the matter of whether or not he knew the kind of support he was attracting, they subpoenaed his correspondence. Even if Powell had not estimated his constituency before the first speech, he would be bound to have known after the letters began to come in. Yet he had persisted in his campaign as if unaware of these vulgar matters.

In other words, he must have been either naïve or cynical. Powell's defence was typically high-sounding. He held that an MP's correspondence was a confidential matter (rather like the confessional, one supposes) but the court insisted on disclosure, and he settled the case, paying his own costs. It is hard to believe the letters in-

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spired by the 'rivers of blood' speech could have borne the light of day. (Incidentally, a book of his 1970 speeches contains 26 pages of laudatory and ill-written letters from admirers – so the Powellist rules are flexible on confidentiality.)

For years it has been commonplace to hear, even among the man's enemies, the payment of tribute to his brain-power, his principles and his flirty consistency. But what strikes the eye in a re-reading of the record is the essential cheapness and shallowness of his style and as above, his apologies. For all its nastiness, the paranoid style does require certain skills, and it is hard to do elegantly or well, especially if it derives from an elite figure attempting to penetrate a plebeian appeal. Listen to him saying, as he did to the Bradford Tories in July 1969, the phrase 'ordinary people like ourselves'. Not quite right, is it? When, early in the following year he attacks the immigration civil service and says, 'one begins to wonder if the Foreign Office was the only Department of State into which enemies of this country were infiltrated.' In a prepared speech, too, But again, the attempt to inlist inchoate fears is unconvincing, and suffers from diminishing returns. The cruellest thing you can do to any Powell speech is to read it twice.

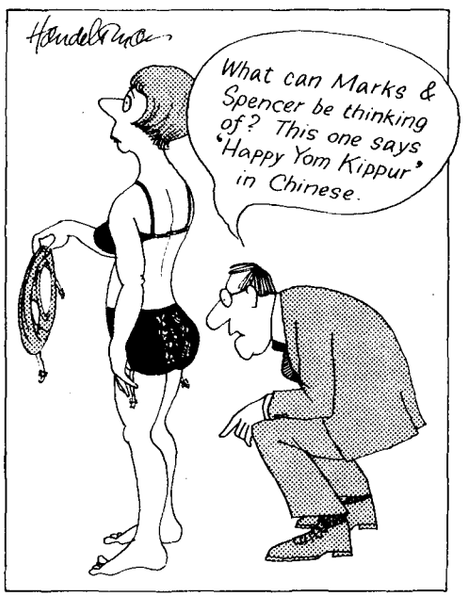
His sense of time and place has always lacked congruity. Sometimes it has been farcical – as in his choice of London in the late 1940s as a base from which to oppose the granting of independence to India. Sometimes it has been faintly sinister; the obvious examples here being Birmingham in 1968, on the anniversary of Hitler's birthday, for his cloacal attack on immigrants and immigration. But usually it is merely irrelevant and banal. Take, for instance, another appeal to populism and paranoia, delivered in November of that year. Powell contrasted:

> The overwhelming majority of the people throughout the country on the one side, and, on the other side, a tiny minority with almost a monopoly hold on the channels of communication, who seem determined not to know the facts and not to realities, who will resort to any device or extremity to blind both themselves and others.

That nicely-judged appeal to the disenfranchised was spent on a conference of Rotarians at Eastbourne. It was never really open to Powell to launch an attack on the intellectuals or the academics, because unlike George Wallace he does want his supporters to confuse him with one ('say what you like about old Enoch, he's cleverer than the rest of 'em put together'). But he has gone as far as he dares. Plebeian rhetoric could give him the impression that he spoke alone for the unheard. It has been a recurring theme in his verbosity, and always contains the seductive idea that the people are wiser than their politicians – as long as they agree with Powell. The corollary, which is often obliquely spelt out, is that if people won't listen they will have nobody but themselves to blame.

The same thought seems to have occurred to the electorate. In 1970 when the 'Powell effect' was felt strongly by the voters, he was taken with exceptional seriousness by the press. If the *Daily Express* seemed excessive in giving him 16 per cent of their election coverage column inches, *The Times* was incredible in devoting *20 per cent* to his doings and sayings. (The same *Times*, by the way, which Powell told William Buckley had been infiltrated to the point of takeover by Marxists. The appetite of the paranoid is insatiable.) But by 1974, when his conviction that he had won the election for Labour was no less serene, every poll showed a decline in his support and influence, even among previous enthusiasts.

By the middle of the following year, the anti-EEC forces in the referendum campaign were finding his adherence a positive embarrassment. They commissioned National Opinion Polls to estimate Powell's propensity to make people vote 'yes' or 'no'. They found that on such a question nine of ten of the voters did not care what he said, and the remainder were divided about which way his opinions affected their own. The final result reflected this estimate of what the population thought of Powell when there was an actual issue on the immediate agenda, but he has never accepted the verdict as 'full-hearted consent'.



Heated exaggeration, suspiciousness and conspiratorial fantasy are all there, though it is some time since 'the enemy within' has been denounced. The world-view rests on a series of fetishes; concepts which have a meaning independent of the evidence. Among these are 'Parliament', 'The Union', 'Britain' and 'The British People'. These themes can be prayed in aid for any argument, and will perform in combinations, such as 'the British Parliament and people' 'never accepting' something they either have accepted or are about to accept.

Dramatic assertions can result – such as the view that riots in Northern Ireland were nothing to do with religious discrimination, or the claim that all parties agree that universities should be run by students. The signs are that the public are losing that taste for this kind of thing, and have relegated Powell to the portion of their lives and minds which grumbles about the country going to the dogs. When a serious decision needs taking, his advice does not.

Hofstadter also observes in his essay that:

> A distorted style is a possible signal that may alert us to distorted judgment, just as in art an ugly style is a cue to fundamental defects of taste. What interests me here is the possibility of using political rhetoric to get at political pathology.

Powell affords excellent examples here, and nowhere more than in his third incarnation as a failure – his role in Northern Ireland. Having arrived as a carpetbagging MP in an area where he had never shown any real interest or commitment before, he adopted a stance which led to the final burning of bridges between himself and the Conservative Party. That party will (God knows) put up with quite a lot, but it will not forgive a man who plays the Orange card on his own side. And it feels that association with 'loyalist' rebels is taking the logic of British nativism a touch too far.

What did Powell get in return for this damaging and deliberate estrangement, apart from a seat in the House? Nothing. His credit with the Protestant voters is low, again because of his weird perceptions of what constitutes consistency. New to Ulster, Powell was prepared to win easy applause by calling for the return of the notorious B Specials, abolished for their lack of discipline as a police force and for their various sectarian infections. But his 'principles' would not let him support the granting of economic aid to Harland and Wolff shipyards in Belfast, a demand to which the Protestant rank and file attached almost equal importance. This extraordinary perspective, combining a dangerous trimming to prejudice with an inflexible dogma, is just the sort of distorted style and judgment that Hofstadter identifies.

Another feature of the paranoid politician is his attitude to the loyalty of other people. Failure is, naturally, always somebody else's fault. But the proceeds of even limited success are hard to cope with as well. Powell was prepared to betray his former colleagues on issues, like immigration, monetarism, Ulster and the EEC, on which many of them agreed with him. It did not matter especially that old friends like Iain Macleod were lost and derided in the process: that is after all the price that a visionary must pay.

Powell's decade of reaction and hysteria must really be reduced to its proper scale. The mediocrity of the surrounding and rival political leaders has made him seem a far more menacing and incisive figure than he can lay any claim to being. He still has a certain appeal to the Babbits, and to many who have difficulty in making sense of reality. His conviction that everything that happens is a vindication of what he always said is symptomatic of the kind of certainty that such people seem to need. But you can't make a *soufflé* rise twice, and Powell probably has fewer admirers and more disillusioned ex-supporters today than ever before. One danger remains. Powell himself may be through, but he has succeeded in poisoning the political well. His intervention was the necessary condition for the more swaggering attitude since taken by gutter racialists of the sort who had hidden under stones since 1945. Perhaps he would be satisfied with the image of himself as John the Baptist, but the ones who come after him may not be exactly to his taste. In keeping our nerve under their attack it may be helpful to remember Powell as the sad, silly, staring figure that he has become.

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Foreign Diary

☐ Spring had arrived in the Rhineland when I was in Bonn last week. But the Germans, of all parties, could hardly have been feeling wintrier about their special relationship with the United States. The sorest grievance, of course, was President Carter's decision not to take a decision about neutron weapons. He didn't say *ja*, say the Germans. He didn't say *nein*. He said *jein*. But the Germans also wanted to bend my ear about something else. They have been stubbornly resisting American pressure to reflate their economy, partly because they feel the sharp fall of the dollar against the mark has made their exports less competitive. The dollar would have fallen even farther in the markets if it hadn't been supported by the Bundesbank. Altogether, I was told on excellent authority, the Bundesbank has spent 12 billion marks, or more than $6 billion, on support operations in the last three months. But what really riles Helmut Schmidt and his men is that these dollars are created by the Bundesbank expressly for the purpose of buying dollars. They are therefore highly inflationary.

Inflation in West Germany is now well under 5 per cent. It would be lower still, and perhaps almost non-existent, if it weren't for these inflationary issues of marks to prop up the dollar. Altogether, the Germans say, the Western European central banks have spent something like $30 billion to support the dollar in the past year. That means the United States is exporting inflation. It is also exporting the foreign problem the Americans cause, as the Germans see it, by refusing to reduce their growing dependence on imported oil. Yet Dick Scammon, the American public opinion analyst (who was in London this week) is undoubtedly right in saying that, by and large, Americans don't believe that the energy crisis is serious.

☐ The real reason for the Schmidt government's considerable annoyance at Carter's neutron bomb non-decision is also rather different from what people on the Left in Britain think. Schmidt does indeed attach great importance to the United States acquiring the capability to build enhanced radiation warheads. And he has said that he would be willing to deploy them on West German soil if one other European government would agree to do the same. But this is not so much because he really wants to see neutron weapons deployed, as because of their value as a bargaining counter with the Soviet Union.

He thinks the Americans would be wrong to stop work on neutron weapons before they have made a serious effort to trade them off against Warsaw Pact tank strength or, preferably, against the Soviet intermediate range weapons targeted against Western Europe, and in particular against the SS 20 missiles.

Schmidt has no exaggerated illusions about the likelihood that the Russians will actually agree to that trade-off. The Germans are well aware that it wouldn't make much sense for the Russians to bargain away their SS 20s if, as seems probable to experts in Bonn, they could develop their own neutron weapons within three years or so.

As long ago as last September, in fact, Schmidt pressed Carter to go ahead with the production of neutron weapons because of their bargaining value. But his game was subtler than it might seem. One of his motives was simply to make the Americans aware how important the Germans think the SS 20s are.

Intermediate range weapons are not covered by the SALT talks. If and when the SALT talks do lead to any diminution in the number of 'strategic' – that is, intercontinental – weapons, that will reduce the threat to the United States. It won't reduce the threat to Western Europe. And this worries the Germans, not just because of the direct military threat, but even more because it would reduce the credibility of the American commitment to defend Europe.

Privately, Schmidt is not unhappy with the substance of Carter's decision to postpone a decision on neutron weapons. What annoys and alarms him is the manner and the timing of it. If Carter had done what he has now done six months ago, the Germans would have found it perfectly acceptable. As it is, they are afraid that Carter has given an impression of weakness and inexperience, not only to his Western European allies (including the ever-challenging Christian Democrats and Franz-Josef Strauss), but also, and more dangerously, to the Russians.

☐ In view of Jeremy Bugler's revelation in the NS last week of Britain's deep involvement in the Brazilian nuclear power consortium, I was very interested by an article in the last issue of the Washington newsletter, *Arms Control Today*. The authors, Jacob Scherr and James Cubie, point out that on the diplomatic front Jim Callaghan has been very receptive to Jimmy Carter's non-proliferation policy. But they comment politely that it is 'ironic' that 'the death knell for Carter's hoped-for plutonium pause may be sounded by the pending British decision to build a large-scale commercial oxide plant at Windscale.'

Scherr and Cubie accuse Joseph Nye, the State Department official responsible, of failing to make clear that the US would stop exporting spent fuel for Windscale. Instead, they say, Nye only said the US 'may' refuse fuel import requests. The whole financing of the £500 million plant is at stake, since British Nuclear Fuels hope to raise the money against ten year contracts from Japan and other countries. As Nye himself has said, 'case by case' US consideration of requests for fuel is not consistent with ten year contracts.

Scherr and Cubie say the British government is rushing the decision through without waiting for the results of an international study of the dangers of the nuclear fuel cycle, due by October 1979. They say Mr Justice Parker, who conducted the Windscale inquiry last autumn, showed 'obvious confusion' about the American position. What is staggering to me, after 100 days of public inquiry, is that no journalist here discovered what the US policy really was. If, indeed, anyone knows what it really is.

☐ When General Pinochet announced an amnesty, and said that from now on no one would be able to say that anyone in Chile was imprisoned for his political beliefs, I suspected that there was a catch, and there is. The first of the 109 prisoners who have been released to reach Europe is now in London. He is Air Force Captain Raul Vergara, arrested for his loyalty to the Allende government on the day of the coup in 1973. Vergara says the prisoners themselves do not recognize what has happened as an amnesty, but only as a commutation of their sentences from imprisonment to exile. He also says that there are still about 70 political prisoners who have not been released, in two categories: those who are still on trial, and those charged by civil courts with 'common crimes', many of whom are in reality in prison for political reasons.

☐ Some years ago Bruce Page, Charles Raw and I wrote a book about the mutual fund fraud, Investors Overseas Services. At the time we had reason to suspect that Bernie Cornfeld's legendary sales force was used as a cover by several intelligence services, including the CIA and the Israelis. So I was intrigued to read in a newsletter from the Chile Committee on Human Rights that Michael Townley, the right-wing son of a Ford dealer in Santiago who is wanted by the US government for his alleged role in organizing the murder of Orlando Letelier, once worked as a salesman for IOS.

Godfrey Hodgson

This World

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ An Anglo-French consortium has been commissioned by a Saudi Arabian company to carry out a feasibility study into proposals for an under-water hotel complex off the coast of Bahrain. The development, probably in international waters, would include all the facilities of a top-class international hotel and could rival London's Mayfair as a magnet for wealthy Arabs looking for somewhere to enjoy their leisure. – *Financial Times* (J. Smith)

☐ In last week's debate on security, Liberal senator Sir Magnus Cormack interrupted Labour's George Georges to say: 'That is the greatest heap of bulldust since Marx first enunciated his Mein Kampf, or whatever it was.' – *National Times* (J. Campbell)

☐ The Soviet Union has doubled the price of petrol and trebled the cost of coffee in the second prices package to be imposed within a year. The Chairman of the State Prices Committee, Mr Nikolai Glushkov, said the petrol rises followed 'the requests of hundreds of people from our population who wrote letters to us emphasising the unjustifiably low price of petrol in our country.' – *Financial Times* (Dorothy Davis)

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Lead with the Chin

As loyal readers of this column will recall, perhaps all too clearly, I do from time to time gaze back down life's blossom and boulder-strewn pathway and cull here and there from among my many and varied nuggets of experience a useful hint or two which I freely pass on to others. Invited recently by the BBC to provide a thoughtful mini-chat of 3¼ minutes' duration for broadcasting during Easter Week on Woman's Hour, the unusually wide response that my talk provoked (letters from all over, and a 1lb box of dairy-milk chocs from a charmingly over-excited listener in Goole), encourages me to share its valuable lesson with you in more permanent form here. I had been asked to trot out some little saying or other that I had found helpful down the years and I provided one from, of all unsuitable areas for me, the world of fisticuffs. In addition to playing cricket and football, we were at my prep school all forced to 'do' boxing. Boxing was manly and the authorities had confidence that the noble art would succeed in making men of us, or something. And so, every Thursday afternoon at 2 p.m. I climbed, aged nine, into a boxing-ring and stood there facing a boy invariably a foot taller and two stones heavier and wearing an expression of a repulsively belligerent nature. A gong sounded and we boxed, by which I mean I just stood there patiently while he hit me. My nose bled, my eyes closed and after some time there came the moment when the referee shouted the joyous word STOP.

At first when this happened, I assumed it meant that the little contest was at an end and I looked forward to climbing out of the ring, removing my gloves and getting on with chapter XV of Bulldog Drummond's adventures in *The Black Gang* (poor Phyllis Benton in some frightful pickle or other – it was no joke being Mrs Drummond – and getting gassed outside the Ritz down a taxi's speaking-tube). But not at all. The hiatus merely meant that the referee wished to ascertain whether I was still alive and breathing and, on finding that I was, he shouted the dread words BOX ON and I started to be hit all over again. 'Box on' is, I suppose, a goodish motto for coping with life's buffets and I do not regret the maulings.

At my age, I make no apologies for harking back, and indeed there is not much of interest to hark forward to, and so, keen as I am on entertainment in general and the stage in particular, let me place before you a theatrical quiz, to which a recent sad event gives point. I do realise that by plunging nostalgically into the happy London past when Shaftesbury Avenue was crammed at 2.15, not with camera-slung foreigners asking to be directed to Kew but with tidily-dressed British persons on their way to matinees, and theatre dressing-rooms were filled with actresses striving to make themselves even lovelier and giving their dressers what for ('Quick, Estelle, another Kirbygrip!'), I risk upsetting yet again that public-spirited correspondent who takes me to task about my 1920s theatre-going. Never mind. The quiz relates to a time about ten years before this, with Gertie Millar still an enchanting memory as *Our Miss Gibbs* and Leslie Henson splitting everybody's sides in *To-Night's The Night*. Ready? Who was the Cambridge graduate who leapt (it was then a rather rare occurrence) straight from the university onto the professional musical comedy stage and into a gigantic floperoo called *The Light Blues*, which had in it a number which went

I'm Cuthbert the Coconut,
The smartest on the tree,
And any girl who isn't shy
Can try a shy at me.

Who (same man) then married one of the show's leading ladies, a performer of stunning talent then playing an *ingénue* called Popsy Velour, and lived happily ever after? Who, and this will give it away, had one of the longest chins in the business?

I have neither the intention nor the right to set myself up as the official NS stage obituarist but when less than justice has been done elsewhere, however unintentionally, to a widely admired and well liked actor who pleased the public for over 60 years, I turn into 'Disgusted, Devon' and can no longer refrain, as we disgruntled letter-writers phrase it, from taking up my pen. Not that anybody was actually disagreeable about Jack Hulbert, and indeed it would have been quite impossible to be so, but just a rather tedious string of titles of the musicals and films in which he appeared, which is what most newspapers tamely settled for, gives us and posterity no idea of his important place in the theatrical musical panorama.

There had been lean and lanky and loose-limbed leading men before him, Joseph Coyne and George Grossmith among them, and there was a real fizzer yet to come (Jack Buchanan), but there was nobody who looked, in splendidly cut pin-stripe suits, more as though, on his way on some sunny day to shop in Bond Street, he had stumbled by mistake through the stage door and was now strolling, with sleek fair hair and blue eyes and an apologetic chuckle, out in front of an audience, prepared to dance a little, sing (rather nasally) a little, and act not very much. He seemed to be the apogee of nonchalance, professionally one of the hardest effects to achieve, and he could charm the birds from the trees. If I make so bold as to say that he looked like, which indeed he was, a gentleman, I suppose that in, and what dreary words they are, 'the climate of today' I shall be subjected to derision. Well, I can take it.

In the dear dead days before revues decided to be rude and disagreeable and generally beastly about everybody and everything (I think they call it satirical) and abandoned even the faintest attempt to make themselves visually agreeable (can anything be uglier than those banks of exposed spotlights, flagrantly flaunted?), Jack Hulbert produced, concurrently with Cochran and Charlot, a glittering fistful of such entertainments with, in his case and as their particular star, Cicely Courtneidge (for that simpering *ingénue* of 1915 in a pink silk dress with panniers and a Dolly Varden hat, archly singing a song called 'Don't you go a-counting of your chickens', was none other than she, as though you hadn't guessed.) There had been revues before but they had largely been friendly and rather casual affairs relying mainly on a collection of big names (*The Co-Optimists* had at least eight, ditto Pelissier's entrancing *Follies*) who sometimes struggled, as Noël Coward remembered, with indifferent lyrics:

Isn't it awfully jolly.
Doing a little revue!
Never could be a more happy idea.
It's nobby and nutty and new!

In them, beautiful show girls, often seeming only half awake, draped themselves in unoccupied corners of the stage and would have frowned disdainfully at any director who requested them to dance or, even, to move at all. The Hulberts changed all that. Nothing was left to chance. They hoarded fine material. All was speed and attack. The choruses were drilled like guardsmen. Revues became precision instruments, amalgams of wit and melody and talent and beauty and hilarity and charm and, what the theatre is really *for*, straight enjoyment and we should, in grateful memory, bow to one of their prime creators.

Roger Woddis

Embarrassment of Riches

'Japanese blush at surplus.' – Headline in *The Observer*, 16 April.

If you want to know who we are,
We are Japanese lords of trade:
We probably built your car,
And your bike is Nipponese-made.
So sorry our products sell,
So sorry we've done so well.

In the Land of the Rising Sun,
Where prosperous gents bow low,
Whenever a deal is done
We redden and say, 'Ah-so!'
Dishonoured, we turn to Zen,
Ashamed of our surplus yen.

So sorry we feel so fit
In the balance of payments race;
So sorry we must commit
Hara-kiri for losing face.
With a Japanese knife we kneel –
We cannot get Sheffield steel.

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Letters to the Editor

Uncertainty Effects

Sir, With reference to Bruce Page's London Diary (NS 7 April), the graffitist in the Royal Connaught is obviously not a scientist since he appears to have confused two statements. The correct versions are, I believe

Heisenberg was here, probably
and
Schrödinger rules the waves, OK?

JOY CLANCY

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No Euro-Reward

Sir, Evidently the passage of time has now encouraged a more searching enquiry into the momentous political question of expense provisions granted by the European Community Institutions. It must straight away be said that the basic scales of travel and subsistence expenses payable to the delegates of *all the nine Member States* were established by the Community long before Britain's entry into the EEC in 1972 or the arrival of the British Socialist Delegates in 1975. Their current levels were approved by the Budget Council which is composed of Treasury or Finance Ministers from each Member State and reflect a considered view as to their reasonableness or otherwise from a source not normally addicted to wild excesses of expenditure.

All delegates to the European Assembly of whatever nationality can, of course, spend less than the expense allowances. However, in my experience, the scope for 'benefit', where this is sought, is very significantly less than the sums indicated in your feature if an endeavour is made to do a thorough job of work, socially as well as politically, in discharge of the mandate given. It is therefore a pity that the snide implication should be made that the assiduous attendance of the British delegates, in contrast presumably to their German, French, Italian, Dutch, Danish, Belgian, Irish and Luxembourgish colleagues, is due to expense allowance allurements to which their other colleagues are, by inference, immune. In this connection it is perhaps permissible for you to name the delegate or delegates who avail themselves of the possibility, suggested in your feature, of signing the register of the Assembly and then simply heading for home.

Many of us who have worked hard in the European Assembly in the performance of the mandate given to us by our Westminster colleagues, and often for longer hours in both the Assembly and the Committees than many MPs at home, are a little sad that there is little media interest either in their activities or in the European political issues involved. That the NEW STATESMAN should have broken its deathly hush on EEC matters since the Referendum by what is little more than a series of generalised smears of the British delegation to the EEC must be a matter of some regret; more particularly since the matters touched upon in your feature have already been dealt with, at intervals over the past two years, by wide sections of the popular press – and with a far greater effort to secure a fair and balanced presentation than has intruded into your columns.

LORD BRUCE OF DONINGTON

European Parliament
Luxembourg

The Cult of War

Sir, How wonderfully refreshing and hope-inspiring to read (NS 7 April) James Fenton's justly embittered, still neat and competent, dissection of Michael Herr's repulsive and overpraised *Dispatches.* This monstrous glorification of the worst aspects of the worst human predicament, by a man whose last name seems all too symbolic of his attitudes, is currently being quoted all over (even in my presumably peaceful country) as the ultimate on the essence of war, and while the sinister implications of this cult of a war-cult are clear enough, very few have spoken out against it. The more thanks to James Fenton!

Apropos Christopher Hitchens's also very cheering article on the Neutron Bomb and the Dutch I would like to add that a strong movement against this weapon, and the ghastly mentality behind it, is also building up in the Scandinavian countries. While of these only Denmark belongs to the EEC, it is significant that it is in the two formerly occupied countries (Denmark and Norway) that the resistance is the strongest, for reasons very similar to the ones Hitchens forwards as those of the Dutch. As a minor correction to the article, I would point out that the Dutch were not the only occupied nation that actually brought off a strike against the Occupation – Denmark did too (in the summer of 1943, shortly before the Danes frustrated the deportation of the Danish Jews, by bringing practically all of them into safety in Sweden).

ELSA GRESS

Murienborg, Stege
Denmark

Anti-Urenco

Sir, We were delighted to see Jeremy Bugler's excellent article on Urenco in last week's NEW STATESMAN.

Four weeks ago – just after the Almelo demonstration in the Netherlands – we were invited by the Dutch National Energy Committee (LEK) to form a counterpart to their own anti-Urenco campaign. As Jeremy Bugler points out, in terms of long-range threats to peace and short-term deterioration in British foreign policy, the Urenco contract with Brazil overawes the Windscale expansion. And British Nuclear Fuels' participation is all the more alarming for being free of either parliamentary or public enquiry.

We are planning to launch anti-Urenco actions in Britain in May and would like to hear from anyone who wishes to be involved.

ALBERT BEALE
(London Greenpeace Group)
ROGER MOODY
(Colonialism and Indigenous Minorities Research and Action Group)

'Stop Urenco' Campaign,
70 Durham Road,
London N7

Transcendental Marshall

Sir, While the use of the name 'Transcendental Meditation' as a general term for meditation techniques may be symptomatic of its growing popularity, I feel you ought to put right Arthur Marshall's use of the term (NS 7 April). Transcendental Meditation is in fact the technique taught by TM teachers who have themselves been taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. It is not a form of Yoga nor does it involve any special way of life, dress or religious commitment. It is rather a mental technique practised for 15-20 minutes twice a day, which whilst simple (it can be taught to five-year-olds) has been shown by extensive research to have profound and far reaching effects on the individual due to the deep relaxation it causes (deeper than sleep). Basically an effortless method of stress release, it enables an individual to remove the stresses he has accumulated which warp his behaviour and prevent him from achieving his full potential. Due to its effectiveness and scientific validation it has spread very rapidly over the last decade, there being about 2 million Transcendental Meditators in the world, 70,000 in England. More interestingly, there has been in recent years an increasing sponorship of TM by government – particularly in America – in all areas from education to the military (there is a scheme encouraging members of the US armed forces to learn). I have been practising the TM technique for seven months now, and have found both my performance and enjoyment of day to day life greatly enhanced: I greatly recommend that Arthur Marshall goes to his local TM centre and gives it 'a whirl'.

HUW DIXON

Balliol College
Oxford

Correcting Neutrons

Sir, Christopher Hitchens's recent article, while somewhat overtaken by President Carter's latest 'decision', summarises the argument against the Neutron bomb with clarity and conviction. It is therefore a pity that it should be marred by minor errors of fact.

AFCENT, located at Brunssum in Holland, is not the HQ of the US Air Force in Central Europe, but it is the HQ of Allied Forces, Central Europe, a NATO ground and air force command covering the most sensitive area of the military line-up.

More importantly – it is misleading to quote Graf von Baudissin's impeccable views as coming from a general in the Bundeswehr. He has been retired from active service for many years and has been most active in the academic sphere – thinking constructively about the unthinkable.

O. PICK

University of Surrey
Guildford

Broadcasting Parliament

Sir, I am surprised that the most obvious and necessary comment on the relaying of question time in Parliament to BBC listeners has not been made. This is that the proceedings would be more intelligible, more audible and altogether less tedious without the automatic obligato of cheers and jeers from Members while the questioner is in action.

G. REICHARDT

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Wyebank View
Tutshill, Chepstow.

John Dean & Haldeman

Sir, Whether H. R. Haldeman's *The Ends of Power* – splenetically reviewed by William Shawcross (NS 14 April) – is a good book, and whether Haldeman is a good man, may be arguable. But it is not a matter for debate whether Haldeman was called by Joseph Alsop a 'bottom-dwelling slug', as Shawcross claims he was. It was John Dean whom Alsop so entitled.

MICHAEL DUGGETT

34 Gondar Gardens
London NW6

NOTE: The mistake was an editorial one; we apologise to Mr Shawcross.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

John Bayley

The Beautiful Lie

Tolstoy's Letters. Vol. I: 1828-1879, Vol. II: 1880-1910 selected and translated by R. F. Christian *Athlone Press* £20

Napoleon used to ask of a general: 'Is he lucky?' Tolstoy was. With his curiously ponderous verbal humour he used to say that he failed to become a general in the army but did get to be one in literature. Dostoevsky, by contrast, needed to be unlucky, which was just as well, because that was the making of *him*.

Such a comprehensive selection of the letters as this is long overdue, and Professor Christian has done an excellent job, not only on the translation (where he has cunningly reproduced the tricks of Tolstoy's epistolary style, including the tendency to use the same word over and over again in the long loose-jointed sentences – the verbal equivalent of prodding a finger at the correspondent) but also in presenting each new recipient to us with a neat résumé of relevant facts and dates. The young man we meet in the early pages seems strangely unlike both the Tolstoy of the biographies and the formidably authoritative artist who moves with such confidence through *Childhood* and the first army tales. He imposes himself totally on his correspondent, yet with such an intensity and spontaneity of warmth and nonsense that the reader too seems drawn at once into the happiest kind of personal relationship.

In the later letters this imposition seems to be used consciously to dominate, perhaps to dominate by a show of humility, very different from the tone of the 20-year-old writing to his brother Sergey:

> I'm so longing to talk any old nonsense to you that if the envelope cost not 10 copecks but 30 roubles, I'd pay that much. I write and envy you the pleasure you'll get when you read my letter.

They make a striking quartet, the Tolstoy brothers, as they confront us from a studio portrait among the photographic Tolstoyana reproduced here. Nikolay, the eldest, was always loved and respected by Lev the writer, who was the youngest of the four. He had been some time in the army when Lev accompanied him to the Caucasus and decided in his turn to become an artillery cadet. For the writer, being in the army was not so unlike the military experiences of Pierre in *War and Peace*. As a Tolstoy he could do what he wanted, go and see what he pleased. A general was to note sourly in the Crimea that he lived like a tourist and did with his guns whatever suited him (the commander of the Light Brigade was doing much the same thing on the opposite side). But from these experiences came the Sevastopol stories, 'The Raid', 'The Cossacks' and – in his old age – 'Hadji Murad'.

Tolstoy was always closer to Nikolay and the second brother Sergey than to the slightly mysterious Dimitry, closest to him in age. But his favourite correspondent in the early days was his aunt Yergolskaya, the original of Sonya in *War and Peace*. He also wrote often to Sergey and his brother's gipsy mistress, later to be his wife. Both Dimitry, who had a taste for low life and for religious mysticism, and the eldest Nikolay died of TB – the latter in Tolstoy's arms at Hyères in the south of France, an experience never to be forgotten. It is described in the most moving letter he wrote:

> A few minutes before he died he dozed off, then suddenly came to and whispered with horror: 'What does it all mean?' He had seen it – this absorption of the self into nothingness. And if he found nothing to cling to what shall I find? Even less . . . 'Take life as it is.' Nothing of the sort! . . . as soon as a man reaches a higher stage of development and ceases to be stupid, it becomes clear to him that everything is rubbish and a fraud, and that the truth which he nevertheless loves more than anything else is a terrible truth.
>
> Well, of course, while there is the desire to eat you eat, to shit you shit, while there is the unconscious stupid desire to know and speak the truth, you try to know and speak it . . . It's the one thing left that I'll go on doing, only not in the form of your art. Art is a lie, and I can no longer love a beautiful lie.

The last sentence is often quoted out of context, but it is significant that the correspondent was his old friend the poet Fet. The beautiful lie is poetry, Fet's especially perhaps – and certainly Fet's aestheticism.

Much later *What is Art?* was to develop the same point, often disingenuously, while the death of Nikolay was used for the death of Levin's brother in *Anna Karenina*, as well as for the death of Ivan Ilyich. And the letter disowns that story: for Nikolay there was no question, as his brother watched him, of light appearing at the end of the black bag into which he was being pushed by death. Even more significantly, telling the truth for the artist appears in this letter as much a *physical* function as eating and shitting.

That subtle Russian-Jewish critic, Lev Shestov, observed that death was not the only truth which Tolstoy sometimes did his best to bend. When young, Tolstoy could hardly help seeing 'truth' from the standpoint of an enormously fortunate and privileged Russian nobleman, and it is this truth which is really the basis of the art of *War and Peace*, where it is in some divine way made to coincide with the proper, and the Russian, order of things.

'The trouble is she has no bones and fire – just like noodles,' Tolstoy wrote of Valeriya Arseneva, the attractive young neighbour he fell for in 1856 and seriously thought of marrying. Her critical swain sent her endless letters telling her how to spend every moment of her time, not to let her maid put on her corsets and stockings, and always to be sure to perform at least one good deed a day. Yet however comical all this fuss is, it never sounds self-important: however tyrannical and pedantic he may seem, Tolstoy is too genuinely serious for that; and though Valeriya must have been driven up the wall by this treatment she would certainly have married him if he had not lost interest.

A curious epistle from the days of Tolstoy's early marriage describes to his sister-in-law, Tanya (the original of Natasha in *War and Peace*), a long 'dream' Tolstoy had in which his wife had become a china doll. Detail follows detail in the best Tolstoyan manner – how her legs stood on a china base, with a brown tree-stump artistically attached, how he put her to bed because she couldn't get in herself. It is a fantasy more reminiscent of Kafka and his powerful subdued world of family significances than anything we normally associate with Tolstoy. But the tone is hard to define: it is more affectionate to the new china creature, and more solicitous of her – Sonya was pregnant at the time – than anything that might suggest an obvious kind of psychological explanation. Sonya's lack of amorousness may have been frustrating; or the dream may be disinfecting with elaborate humour a more sinister dream of Sonya's own, in which she had seen herself destroying a doll that symbolised the natural son of Tolstoy and the peasant woman with whom he had lived at Yasnaya Polyana before his marriage. What is certain is that the Behrs family regarded the fantasy simply as a fine humorous creation of their gifted son-in-law.

The fabled giant of the later stages, imprisoned in his reputation, is mostly exchanging missives with such fellow pontiffs as Gandhi. There are some pathetic notes to Chertkov, the power-hungry ex-Guards officer who obtained more and more influence over him, seeking to secure copyright

Hugo Williams

Come, Tears

The days are full of darkness, the
evenings glow
With longing for a year
That's going out. Come, night,
Fall fast on this house. Let me sleep
In love with her again. Come, tears,
and fall
For other nights like this,
Whose spell I broke by so deceiving her.

Rain hissing at the window, the world
is stuck
In the last groove of a year
That's nearly gone. Come, rain,
Splash your brushstrokes down
Grey stone. Come, tears, and fall like that
On my hands, that I may find
This sadness no harder to bear.

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away from the family. In a painful letter the old man begs pardon humbly for letting his wife come between him and this masterful follower. Not surprising that towards the end, when everything he wrote was jealously competed for by disciples and memoirists, he seems to have begun a kind of secret correspondence with himself. For a last comfort he invokes his mother, dead before his memory began. And the longing for that maternal breast drove him from home at last, into the arms of death, whom he had always so much hated and feared.

Maurice Richardson

Blind Beauty

A Captive of Time: My Years With Pasternak by OLGA IVINSKAYA translated with an introduction by Max Hayward *Collins/Harvill* £7.50

Olga Ivinskaya, a beautiful and volatile Soviet literary lady of Russian, Polish and German parentage, with a tragic background, met Pasternak in 1946 in the office of the monthly magazine *Novy Mir*, where she worked. She was 34; he was 56. She was already a fervent admirer of his poetry and had come under the spell of his personality, that indescribable blend of gentleness and wistful, romantic, semi-sublimated sensuality. The effect of Pasternak on audiences at readings, by the way, was electric: 'a handkerchief belonging to him was torn in shreds, and the remaining crumbs of tobacco in his cigarette butts were snatched up.' I myself remember how, in London during the war, a Russian lady official, uncompromisingly correct in every other respect, told me with bated breath that whatever anyone might say Pasternak was unique and incomparable. It all helps one to understand the peculiar importance which the authorities attached to him. Even Stalin told his myrmidons: 'Do not touch this cloud-dweller.'

The love-affair was more or less instantaneous. Though Pasternak never formally separated from his (second) wife, Olga lived with him for most of his last 14 years; apart from her first imprisonment, 1949-53, she worked with him and managed him, and was the model for Lara, the heroine of *Doctor Zhivago*. After his death in 1960, she was again arrested (this time with her daughter), and sentenced to eight years forced labour, ostensibly for currency offences in receiving royalties from abroad. Her book is long, very eloquent and often moving, now artless, now artful, uneven but packed with material and altogether fascinating. She jumps about in time in a way that sometimes drives one nearly mad, but Max Hayward provides an admirably clear précis of Pasternak's biography and a guide to the scores of characters who flit in and out of the story.

Olga I. is a most assiduous chronicler of her poet's utterances and there are lots of interesting literary technicalities, especially about the art of translating poetry, of which Pasternak was a master. But politics couldn't be kept out of their summer idyll for long. Stalin's final bout of *paranoia tyrannis* had already set in, touching off the Zhdanovite pilloryings of writers and musicians. Pasternak, thinking their affair might be attracting too much attention, persuaded Olga to leave *Novy Mir* and take a room in the writers' village at Peredelkino . . .

At this point, Olga interrupts her own story and backtracks to Pasternak's odd and ambivalent relations with Stalin. They did meet – she is very insistent about this – in 1925. Pasternak told her Stalin was the most terrifying person he had ever seen in his life: 'a man like a crab advanced at me out of the darkness.' They didn't get on too badly, and discussed which Georgian poets (most of them afterwards shot) should be translated into Russian. In 1934 came the much-discussed telephone conversation about the arrest of Osip Mandelstam. Stalin put on one of his most odiously crafty performances, implying that it would be all right about Mandelstam, but why hadn't Pasternak tried to do more for him? 'If a poet friend of mine were in trouble I would do anything to help him.' Even so, Pasternak, who seems to have suffered from occasional fits of waffling, did in 1936 write two poems addressed to Stalin. Max Hayward calls them 'a further veiled attempt to reason with Stalin'. Olga I. quotes the lines: 'Labouring prodigiously he yet spares /the old familiar scheme of things.' She says that Pasternak's feelings about Stalin were always exceedingly complex and contradictory.

Anyway, from 1936 onwards, despite his unwilling appearance at the International Writers' Conference in Paris, Pasternak took an open stand against conformity and seemed, as Hayward puts it, 'to be deliberately inviting . . . virtual ostracism'. Among other poets, apart from Mandelstam, who figure in this section of the book are Mayakowsky, whom Olga I. tends in part to equate with the character of Strelnikov in *Doctor Zhivago*, Akhmatova (looking oddly like Edith Sitwell in her photograph) and the even more tragically ill-fated Marina Tsvetayeva. In one way or another most of the Soviet writers with any pretensions to talent are mentioned, with a special tenderness for the supremely civilised Konstantin Paustovsky, whose summing-up in a letter of the whole *Doctor Zhivago* episode was a splendid rebuke to the toadying philistines.

Throughout her book, Olga I. is constantly reverting to *Doctor Zhivago* and telling how this or that event in Pasternak's own life is linked with corresponding passages in the novel. After her arrest in 1949 she was first interrogated by Abakhumov (Beria's number two, who features in Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle* and was shot on Khrushchev's orders soon after his master), later by Semionov who, on hearing loud banging at the gates of the Lubianka, smiled and said: 'It's Pasternak trying to get in here. Don't worry, he'll make it before long.' Most of her sentence – she had a miscarriage in prison – was served among Ukrainian peasant women at a labour camp in Mordovia. She was released in April 1953, during the amnesty that followed Stalin's death. The inevitable train journeys, so characteristically Russian a feature of *Zhivago*, play a part in Olga's own story. There is one particularly significant meeting en route from Leningrad to Moscow with the violinist, Rostropovich, the friend and supporter of Solzhenitsyn.

The first three years after Olga's return from prison were quiet. Pasternak, while always giving him credit for denouncing Stalin, had a low opinion of Khrushchev, who reminded him of the pig in *Animal Farm*. This, and the suicide of the alcoholic, disillusioned former Stalinist writer Fadeyev, inspired some verses on the cult of personality. Trouble started again in 1955, when *Zhivago* was finished; but it wasn't until 1957, when it was published in Italy, that the roof blew off. The award of the Nobel Prize intensified the persecution which drove Pasternak near to suicide. The story is complicated and Olga I. tells it in detail, describing various ghastly meetings of the Writers' Union, at which Pasternak was vilified by servile hacks, and her own efforts liaising with the central committee over the letter of 'repentance'. For the last year of his life, Pasternak was left more or less in peace. There was a remarkable spontaneous demonstration at his funeral. It was peculiarly base of the Khrushchevite authorities to harass Olga after his death. (Khrushchev himself makes a rather disingenuous reference to Pasternak in his autobiography. His son-in-law, Adzhubei, on his visit to England in 1961, brought a set of documents supposedly proving Ivinskaya's guilt, which he wanted British newspapers to publish 'without any comment whatever' and complained of censorship when this was refused.) Olga's second imprisonment, mostly at Potma, included an encounter with a strange and rather sinister proletarian poetess, former secretary of Lunacharsky, sentenced for writing anti-Stalin verses, who quarrelled with her over editing the prison wall newspaper. Released in 1964, she now lives in Moscow. Pasternak once described her as the most courageous woman in Russia. I see no reason to dissent from this verdict.

Jonathan Dimbleby

Truth to Tell

Putting Reality Together by PHILIP SCHLESINGER *Constable* £8.50 and £4.95

No reporter who has witnessed the pathetic stream of refugees fleeing from the Israeli bombardment of South Lebanon finds much difficulty in describing the Israeli invasion as an act of terror. In private, of course. In public the term 'terrorist' is generally reserved for those who don't have jet planes to mutilate innocents from a distance. So the Palestinians are terrorists, while those who orchestrated the counter-terror remain morally inviolate as the Israeli Cabinet.

Most reporters have a public lahguage imposed on them. Their choice of terms

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reflects the way in which they are required to interpret reality. In the case of the BBC the choice is particularly delicate and most closely scrutinised, as reporters are obliged to demonstrate a supreme commitment to the principle of impartiality upon which the Corporation rests much of its claim to public trust and esteem.

Philip Schlesinger is a sociologist who has detected a myth, if not a downright deception, at the heart of the BBC. He is not the first to do so and he won't be the first to be ignored by those he assaults. However, his findings have that rare authority which springs from first-hand experience. The BBC is usually wary of close scrutiny; but evidently Schlesinger managed to persuade someone who should have known better to let him spend no less than 1,260 hours in radio and television newsrooms watching the BBC feed the nation with its daily dose of 'reality'. Many of the 120 news editors, subs and reporters whom he interviewed will see Schlesinger's thesis as an act of treachery.

It is perhaps a little unfair to read *Putting Reality Together* in the Lebanon, where newsmen are confronted with a horrible and confusing reality, and, unlike Philip Schlesinger, don't have four quiet years in which to reflect upon it before putting pen to paper. Newsmen will be greatly irritated by Schlesinger's failure to see the world through their eyes. There *is* a great gulf. Where reporters see deadlines, Schlesinger observes that 'newsmen make fine conceptual distinctions concerning time. This is only to be expected as the temporal dimension of their occupational culture is highly elaborated.' Although such monstrosities are rare, Philip Schlesinger's perception can be irritatingly two-dimensional.

But when Mr Schlesinger discards his sociological approach he penetrates much more deeply into the BBC than its moguls will like, and newsmen should go with him. It is rather like being conducted on a tour through a sponge. It is hard to find your way but there is a design. And the sponge drips. Schlesinger discovers a BBC news which disseminates a particular and consistent version of reality that may fit the facts but certainly serves the system – drip by authoritative drip. As he puts it, the BBC's impartiality is 'predicated on the existence of the present political system and its underlying social and economic order, and the BBC is required to sustain it.'

Newsmen are neither corrupt nor foolish, but 'victims'. They process reality according to a corporate ideology which the need for security or the search for status obliges them to share. Judgments and attitudes handed down to them from on high – discreetly in the form of memos – condition their perception and even control their lives. To be without a point of view is to obtain the BBC's seal of approval, to join the elect, to become a Corporation man. And yet, as Schlesinger carefully demonstrates, the impartial newsmen are trapped in self-delusion. There are numerous examples. When *The Times* published a report by a Catholic priest, Father Hastings, about a massacre by the Portuguese army in a remote village in Mozambique, the BBC newsroom (Schlesinger in attendance) became very confused. Caetano was on his way to London. The deputy news editor smelt a rat: 'the left-wing were waiting for this . . . a campaign to embarrass the Government.' And Father Hastings? Was he 'a left-wing militant or possibly a militant on Catholic rights?' So much for neutrality: Richard Baker and Angela Rippon, trusty spokespeople for the Newsroom, articulate 'a perspective in which fact and value are inextricably woven.'

And that is the point. The BBC tends to meet such broadsides by suggesting that they are the product of a diseased or extreme mind. It prefers (as does the IBA) to erect a false distinction between 'impartiality' and 'commitment' – the former being the product of a balanced mind, the latter of a rabid ideology or contempt for the facts. Northern Ireland is the classic case and Schlesinger devotes a full chapter to its coverage by the BBC. Here the conflict falls outside the framework of dispute tolerated by the Establishment's consensus. Lord Hill's assurance to the last Conservative Government that the BBC 'is on the side of the army against the gunmen' was a crude way of expressing a clear commitment to the State's perception that the six counties are in no relevant sense disputed territory. So we return to the language: the army has 'marksmen' while the IRA uses 'snipers'. The principle of impartiality is openly discarded.

Philip Schlesinger does not perceive a conspiracy to keep the people in servitude; nor does he challenge the truism that the BBC is the best broadcasting organisation in the world. He offers a more serious critique: that 'reality' is confined by TV news to a strait-jacket which too often stifles the truth. By challenging the most powerful myths about British broadcasting, *Putting Reality Together* turns out to serve the broadcasters.

Christopher Hill

Other People

John Locke and the Theory of Sovereignty: Mixed Monarchy and the Right of Resistance in the Political Thought of the English Revolution by JULIAN H. FRANKLIN *Cambridge* £7.20

In 17th-century England great changes took place in constitutional and political theory. Before 1640, the King was sovereign, and Parliament was called at the King's discretion. After 1688, Parliament (or the King in Parliament) was sovereign. But these changes were the consequence, not the cause of the events of the English Revolution. In the American, French and Russian Revolutions political theorists may have had some influence on the course of events; in the English Revolution they tagged along behind them.

Julian H. Franklin's scholarly book deals with the muddle that they made of it. No claim was made for the sovereignty of Parliament before the civil war. The most that Charles I's opponents asserted was that there was a mixed or balanced constitution in which power was partially shared by Parliament, the House of Commons representing 'the people'. But who was to decide between the partners when the balance broke down? The Parliamentarians were pushed gradually into assuming sovereign power in fact, but they were extremely reluctant to claim it in theory. They distinguished between the King and his evil councillors, to

Barrie Penrose & Roger Courtiour
THE PENCOURT FILE
"An important and necessary book . . . there *have* been cover-ups – no-one who reads the evidence can doubt this . . . but on the Norman Scott affair the authors have done a first-class job in the best traditions of investigative journalism . . . It is a detective story. If you read it carefully there are only two possible answers to the main question. And I think, if you read it again very, very carefully there is only one. And it is tragic."
Lord Beaumont of Whitley, Hampstead and Highgate Express
"A book to make anyone concerned with what Sir Harold Wilson grandly called 'the Governance of Britain' stop and think." **Time & Tide**
**Does* this controversial book hold the clue to the timing of the next election?
Adam Raphael, **Observer,** March 26 1978: "He (Mr Steel) has had the additional worry that criminal charges in the Norman Scott affair may soon be blazoned over the front pages. An election before this particular storm might not be unwelcome."
Photographs **£5.90**
Secker & Warburg

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the fury of Charles I; they changed the sense of the traditional maxim, 'the King can do no wrong', to mean that if wrong was done someone other than the King could be called to account for it (by Parliament). But to assert the sovereignty of Parliament over the King would have meant a revolutionary break with tradition, and this they were not prepared to make. Very intelligent men – an Eliot, a Pym – refused to accept the only theory which would have made sense of what they were doing.

Dr Franklin, who is a political theorist rather than a historian, shows the contortions into which Parliament's publicists got themselves when they defended the levying of war against the King in the name of King and Parliament. He can hardly conceal his philosophical impatience with theorists who could not or would not see that their position 'embraced a contradiction' and that they ought logically to have claimed a right to depose the King. But the propagandists in question – men of the intellectual shrewdness of Philip Hunton and Henry Parker – were not philosophers; it would have been politically inept to claim a right of deposition for Parliament.

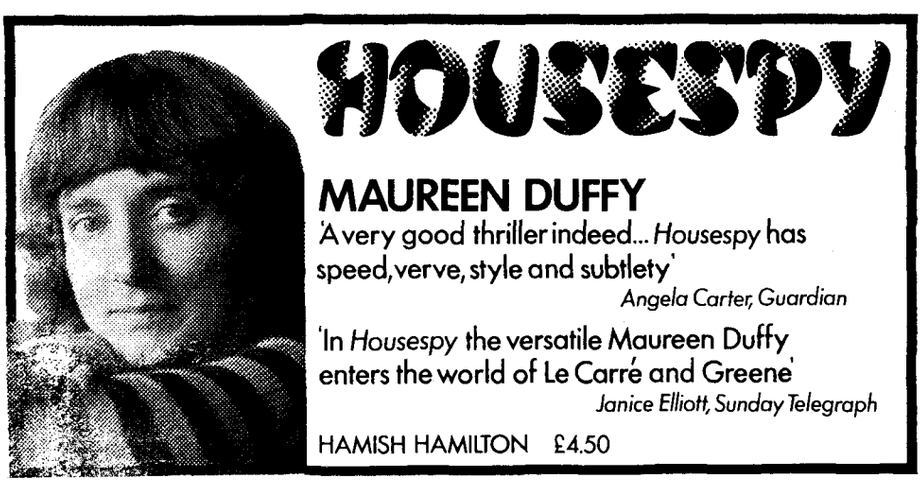
The King was the keystone of the social arch. His authority derived from God, and his person was hedged about with divinity. The landed ruling class knew instinctively before the civil war, and learned by bitter experience during the Revolution, that any revolutionary challenge to royal authority would be likely to lead to a querying of their own authority as landlords, employers and 'natural rulers' of the localities. When civil war came, the Parliamentary army put forward demands which were not inhibited by respect for any traditional authority, and which treated Parliament and gentry with no more deference than they treated the King.

Yet Charles was not deposed and executed as a logical consequence of any theory of Parliamentary sovereignty. He was tried because the army lost patience with his refusal to face the realities of his situation, by men who believed they were executing God's vengeance. There were few theoretical republicans among them. Only the democratic party of the Levellers argued that the civil war was evidence of a breakdown of the traditional state which the people must found anew. Here we come to see how wise those illogical parliamentarian theorists had been. For on what grounds could they have claimed a right to depose the King on some theory of popular sovereignty?

Dr Franklin is interesting on Philip Hunton, and especially on George Lawson, a respectable middle-of-the-road clergyman who in 1657 wanted to justify a return to something like the old constitution but with the supremacy of Parliament guaranteed and the crown transferred to the House of Cromwell. Lawson took up the Leveller theory that the state had been dissolved (the Levellers had by now been safely defeated) and developed the idea that society could continue to exist when the state had broken down. His treatise was not published until 1660, when it had been overtaken by events. But, as Dr Franklin shows, interest in him revived in 1688 when similar circumstances recurred, though now it was the House of Orange rather than the House of Cromwell which was to replace the Stuarts. It could be held that the government was dissolved by James II's flight and that power had reverted to 'the people'. That was Locke's view, whether he took it from the Levellers direct or via Lawson.

But who are the people? And how exactly do they reconstitute the state? These were very difficult and divisive questions. Dr Franklin quotes opponents who rightly pointed out that the House of Commons did not represent the people, perhaps not a quarter of them. It represented the gentry and the merchant oligarchies. That was exactly why the illogical parliamentarian propagandists of the 1640s had not wanted to appeal to the people by claiming a right of deposition, and exactly why the Levellers had wanted to do so. By 'the people', Lawson tells us, 'I mean the rational judicial party', not servants or copyholders, not the 'many members of a community [who] are insufficient of themselves to judge what is just and good'. Some of Locke's 'people' had servants in the state of nature.

Dr Franklin sometimes writes as though political theory was like natural science: theories are gradually refined and made more logical and comprehensive, until 'the truth' is found. 'With Lawson and Locke,' he sums up, 'almost all accumulated confusions in the theory of sovereignty were finally cleared up.' Some might think that their failure to define satisfactorily who 'the people' are and how they are to function remained a considerable confusion. I find this type of political and constitutional theory interesting mainly for what it tells us about the thinkers. Royalist propagandists took up the parliamentarian theory of mixed monarchy once it was clear the King could not regain sole power. Nobody took much notice of Lawson, and the settlement of 1688-89 assumed that James II had 'vacated' the throne, a saving of appearances which Locke was too logical to accept. His ideas had little if any influence on the events of 1688-89. The more significant thinkers of the 17th century seem to me to be Hobbes, who said that it did not matter who was sovereign provided he protected civil society, and Winstanley and Harrington who opened up a class analysis of politics. But for those who are interested in his subject Dr Franklin's is a painstaking and conscientious work from which they will learn much.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Paul Martin

Heroes & Hell

Biko by DONALD WOODS *Paddington Press* £5.95

Do not be misled by the title: it is not Biko by Donald Woods, but Donald Woods through Biko. The book reveals more about the traumas of a liberal white South African battling with his conscience than it does about the reality of the black man's struggle. That, despite his egocentric style, is not the way Woods intended it. He genuinely wished to render 'as faithful a testimony to the greatness of Steve Biko as possible'; and so significant did he think the world would find it that he chose self-exile to get this 'tribute' published. It would be cruel to say he needn't have bothered. The book is important, largely because so little has been written about the Black Consciouness movement which motivated the youth of Soweto in their defiance of police bullets, and which may yet flourish into a national black reawakening. *Any* insight into the minds and deeds of the remarkable founders of the philosophy is instructive, and makes fascinating reading. But that *is* despite Mr Woods's total inability to paint a picture of Biko in any way which resembles a real human being.

Biko, according to Woods, is something near perfection: courageous, gentle, charming, resolute, understanding, appreciative, fair-minded . . . the list goes on and on. And indeed Woods has admitted that he 'hero-worshipped' Biko, which, he added in a radio interview last week, was somewhat unusual in a man of 44 for a man of 30. True, you can detect between the lines some minor faults which Woods is blind to: Biko's arrogance, for example, his callow world-view, and such things as his apparent exploitation sexually of the adulation of some of his fellow-devotees. But Woods was too overcome with the achievement at last of a real and stimulating relationship with a

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black man to allow his normally acute mind any place at all beside his heart – which is why the book is really about Woods's own dilemmas and those of his white fellow-countrymen.

How do you bridge the chasm between the different worlds within the same country? Woods is at his best when he manages to break out of the white liberal's paternalism, when he can joke with the taboos. For instance, after their first meeting he faces up wittily to a taunt by Biko about his flashy Mercedes. 'Look', says Woods, 'you do your black thing and I'll do my white thing. The days of white privilege are numbered, and I'm enjoying it while I can.' Contrast this unselfconsciousness with his ludicrous claim that he deeply hurt Biko by telling him he intended to name his pitch-black dog 'Saso' after the all-black student movement Biko founded. Xhoza tribal tradition, Woods explains, regards dogs less affectionately than Western custom, so Steve was insulted. As if Biko didn't know.

The white South African will *really* be making progress when he accepts that there will enevitably be misunderstandings and hurt feelings all round as the barriers of apartheid are pulled down. Woods himself went a long way towards an understanding of Blackness from the lips and the example of its greatest exponent. He can even accept and understand why Black Consciousness wants white liberals like himself to leave blacks alone to liberate themselves, to find their own identity and not feel obliged to conform to the naïve stereotype that liberals in their own image seek to impose on blacks. But Woods himself must realise that there is an element of racialism in Black Consciousness (avoided by a handful, including Biko); and an inevitable oversimplification, a conviction – shared with their chief enemy, the Nationalist government – that shades of grey between the two extremes of black and white merely 'confuse the issue': in reality they provide alternatives that do not accord with the stereotypes.

It is fair to say – as he does – that Woods was the man the Afrikaners most hated. Vilification of him knew no bounds when he joined in the Progressive Party's 1974 election campaign, much to its leader Colin Eglin's horror – he nearly lost his seat because of Woods's 'help'. Woods was labelled with the filthiest word in the Afrikaner's lexicon: an 'Afrikaner-hater'. And yet he was the first South African English-language editor to run a column in Afrikaans, to help educate the despicable English-speaking South African out of his irrational contempt for the Afrikaner. Woods, despite his background, overcame not only black prejudice but 'Afrikaner-hate' as well – as, amazingly, did Biko, who understood his tormentors better than they him. This, indeed, may have sparked off the violent scene that ended with such bathos, wrapped in urine-soaked blankets, a life so vibrant and so full of promise and hope for his troubled country.

It is in fact those sections of the book where Biko's words are reproduced verbatim that pay the most fitting tribute to the man. Transcripts of the two court hearings in which he played a leading part – one of course posthumously – are more eloquent testimony to the country's anguish than Woods's crude outpourings can ever hope to be. The very ideas of Black Consciousness are on trial in one case in which Biko, oddly enough, is a defence witness in the prosecution of his political subordinates. But deeds and not words will decide South Africa's future, whether by increased sanctions, as Woods advocates, or by internal or external violence. In that history, Steve Biko may go down as a martyr who paved the way for the black man's self-respect; Woods can expect – and would indeed ask – no more than to be one of the forgotten many who gave some real aid to the oppressed as they travelled that long and lonely road.

James Cameron

Shadow Boxing

A Shaft of Sunlight by PHILIP MASON *Deutsch* £6.50

For those of us who reached India in the twilight years when the captains and the kings were, if not departed, well on the slippery slope – that is to say, at the start of the Cripps Dynasty – Philip Mason was already quite famous among the knowing. 'There', people would say, 'is an ICS man who understands, who can see things.' So he did – and so he should have done, after 20 years in the Indian Civil Service, both in district administration and in central government. I am always surprised when we are so astonished that a bureaucrat can be humane, understanding, even rather stiffly witty. I agree that jolly few of them are, but the ICS produced more than most, perhaps because the British Raj handed over such really potent authority into the hands of comparative children. Philip Mason, in his twenties, was running the equivalent of a kingdom. It didn't make them humble, but it did confuse their poor old brains, and the Indians would have been mugs not to have exploited this.

I suppose Philip Mason is probably one of the last of the best. That is to say, of the residual components of the Imperial theme who were eager enough to love India for its great values and rights, and honest enough to despise it for its occasional meanness and its wrongs. You have to have a pretty intimate bond to say this about India, and I think Mason and I could claim to share such a thing. His role was a master and mine was a subject, but it makes strangely little difference. People like Mason and myself will always have two homelands. Mine was not the Raj, so mine will endure a little bit longer. Not much longer, but a bit.

Mason subtitles his autobiography 'Memories of a Varied Life'. This I am sure it must seem to him to be, since he did in fact move from school to school, from class to class, from the caress of one master to another, finally from one college don to another, each one seeming to mark a thumbprint more lasting than anything subsequent. It was not so varied a life as those of us found it who went to work at 15. But just half-way through *A Shaft of Sunlight* Mr Mason gets us down to business and into his Indian life, which means so much more than all those childhood *contes*. Suddenly he found himself an adolescent ruler.

> I certainly did not stop to think about the corrupting influence of authority. After all, it was for exercising authority that I had been trained at school. But it is hard to convey the authoritarian atmosphere of India, an expectation that anyone would do what you told him . . .

How different that of a District Officer from the home life of a foreign correspondent!

I think Mason has a bit of a nerve in giving us the nine-hundred-and-tenth volume of The India I Knew, since he tells us not one single circumstance or fact that we haven't heard before. I value it nonetheless, and I shall cherish it, simply because I cannot read enough about the loyal *patwaris* in the villages and the memberships in the clubs, who all pretended to vanish and never did.

Let us with bowed heads consider page 234, which is the index at 'G'.

> *Games*, at school, 'intellectual', at Balliol.
> *Ganges*, river.

No *Gandhi*? No *Mahatma*, no *Indira*? Not a word. *A Shaft of Sunlight*, indeed. Without a hint of shadow.

George S. Kaufman and the Algonquin Round Table

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Craig Raine

Amputated Years

Collected Poems by BASIL BUNTING *Oxford* £3.75 and £2.25
Complete Poems by KEITH DOUGLAS edited by Desmond Graham *Oxford* £3.95

Overdrafts is Basil Bunting's witty half-title to his imitations of classical authors, Latin and Persian. It could have been used on the spine. Glancing wryly at a lifetime's poverty, ironising his debt to tradition, the word 'overdraft' lastly adumbrates Bunting's poetic method throughout his work. Readers need to be familiar with the borrowed capital if they are to appreciate the interest – the something over. In the straight imitations, to which Pound's *Homage to Sextus Propertius* stands godfather, this is relatively simple. Bunting's version of Horace's 'Cum tu, Lydia, Telephi' takes the urgently jealous Latin and recasts it into stylised gangsterese, the modern pastoral of Bogart:

> Take my advice, better not count on your tough guy's mumbling your pretty mouth always.

The tone is now a modernised sidelong mutter. Yet it is not intended to obliterate Horace with irony: his underdraft reappears in the last lines ('Only the thrice blest are in love for life') and the opening's apache dance acknowledges its relationship with the classical pas de deux. The ironies are equal and the end result is assimilation.

The same thing is partially true of Bunting's first major poem, 'Villon', which fuses Villon's incarceration with Bunting's two spells in stir – the first as a Quaker conscientious objector in Wormwood Scrubs (1918); the second in Paris when, after a drunken evening, he entered the wrong apartment, tried to expel the rightful tenant and, it's rumoured, bit a policeman. Bunting acknowledges minor differences but only to assert their essential similarity:

> Whereinall we differ not. But they have swept the floor
> there are no dancers, no somersaulters now,
> only bricks and bleak black cement and bricks,
> only the military tread and the snap of locks.

Apart from sophistications in police methodology, like Alphonse Bertillon's system of anthropometrics, their suffering is the same. Accordingly, Bunting appropriates Villon's words and, for much of the poem, shares an 'I' with him.

The extent of Bunting's overdraft is, however, the extent of Villon's riches:

> My soundbox lacks sonority. All but inaudible
> I stammer to my ear:
> Naked speech! Naked beggar both blind and cold!
> Wrap it for my sake in Paisley shawls . . .

Circumstances compel Bunting to borrow where Villon created *ex nihilo* 'L'emperieres au poing dorez', the line chosen by Bunting to epitomise Villon's remarkable achievement. Out of the iron came forth sweetness, a matchless miracle that survives its creator – the bare forked animal elegised by Bunting who shared his pain.

In 'Villon', the debits and credits are clear. Bunting borrows the magnificence and recreates the anguish forgotten even by early admirers of Villon like Clément Marot whose 1533 preface is quoted in all its thoughtlessness:

> 'whose words we gathered as pleasant flowers
> and thought on his wit and how neatly he described things'.

In 'Attis: Or, Something Missing', though, the debts are more widespread. Catullus (LXIII) is invoked in the epigraph, while in the course of the poem one finds references to Dante's *Inferno* IX, Book II of Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* and Milton's 'Methought I saw my late espoused Saint'. Of these, Catullus seems the major creditor. (There are echoes of *The Waste Land,* too – 'Oh Sis! I've been 'ad' – but they seem merely derivative.) Catullus's Attis sails to Phrygia, emasculates himself in a religious frenzy for the Earth Mother, Cybele, sleeps it off and wakes up regretting the deed. In particular, he realises that he'll never be able to return to his homeland, especially since Cybele unleashes a lion to shoo him back into the undergrowth.

Broadly, Bunting follows this scenario, though the emasculation is figurative and the young Attis is now 60, 'out of puff' and running to fat. There is no shortage of solutions to the problem of his 'impotence'; the difficulty is in reconciling them to each other. On the one hand, it's partly the result of boredom and age ('Long loved and/too long loved, such decay of ardour'); on the other hand, there's amorous cowardice after a jilting:

> I dare no longer raise my eyes
> on any lass
> seeing what one of them has done to me.

Most importantly, there's another kind of cutting off, on which poetic sterility follows – self-exile in an alien environment. Catullus's 'abero foro, palaestra, stadio et gymnasiis' is comically reworked as

> I also won the 14 carat halfhunter goldwatch at the annual sports and flowershow . . .

This is a theme to which Bunting returns, more personally, in his great tragic masterpiece, 'Briggflatts'. It begins with beautifully evoked memories of a childhood love in Briggflatts, a village south of Sedbergh:

> He has untied the tape
> of her striped flannel drawers
> before the range.

The simplicity of the gesture is matched by the simplicity of diction. This love was 'laid aside' when Bunting's literary ambition took him abroad. In Paris, he was editorial assistant on Ford Madox Ford's *Transatlantic Review;* he stayed with Pound at Rapallo; spent some time in Berlin; visited the States, meeting Zukofsky and Carlos Williams; lived in Tenerife; was for a time the skipper of a millionaire's schooner; and was *The Times* correspondent in Persia. Most of these wanderings are present, obliquely and non-factually, in the poem.

During this long exile, wilfully self-imposed, Bunting felt cut off from true creativity and, Attis-like, describes himself as 'self-maimed', conscious that 'amputated years ache'. Moreover, something was missing from his poetry, the instinctive song of Briggflatts:

> It looks well on the page, but never
> well enough. Something is lost
> when wind, sun, sea upbraid
> justly an unconvinced deserter.

Two historical figures, Alexander and Eric Bloodaxe, are employed as objective correlatives by Bunting, since both were ambitious, self-seeking exiles. Bloodaxe, son of the Norwegian Harold Fairhair, was King of Dublin, Orkney and York before he was mysteriously murdered at Stainmore. Alexander's pursuit of conquest took him to the ends of the earth and an early death at 33. Neither is admirable in Bunting's terms, and in Part III Alexander's futile ambition ('But we desired Macedonia') is bitterly ironised.

Conflating Dante's *Inferno* VIII and Firdausi's *Shahnama* XX: 29, Bunting begins with a scatalogical portrait of ambition and ends with Alexander's encounter with Israfel or Azrael, the Koran's angel of death. It is a powerfully phantasmagoric indictment, drawing on the *Shahnama's* account of Sekandar's (Alexander's) failure to find the Water of Life. Instead, the angel confronts him with the futility of his life and his imminent death: 'Oh thou slave of greed! Toil not so much, because some day a call will reach thine ears.' In the poem, the Water of Life is a spring at Briggflatts, Bunting's relinquished Macedonia.

There, true creativity waits with the girl of Part I whose objective correlative is Pasiphae. Pasiphae is conquered rather than conquering: she suffered the bull and 'gloried in unlike creation'. Wise passiveness, the poem argues, achieves the desired song and the girl is always remembered as 'laying the tune frankly on the air'. 'Briggflatts' closes with the realisation that she is the guiding star, part of the music of the spheres. 'Ridiculous the waste sad time/Stretching before and after.'

Bunting is a great master and we must educate ourselves to read him. Nevertheless, anyone with an ear or an eye will immediately appreciate his extraordinary lyric gift and his acute visual sense:

> Frost has put rowan down,
> a russet blotch of bracken
> tousled about the trunk.

In 'Briggflatts', the voice is totally achieved – clipped, consonantal, shy of Tennysonian *bel canto,* chary of the definite article, mutedly alliterative. The overdraft is paid off.

'Briggflatts' was written when Bunting was 64, after a long silence. Keith Douglas was killed in Normandy, aged 24, yet left an impressive body of work. Probably, he was more naturally gifted than Bunting and most other poets for that matter, but what remains is excellent rather than great. At his best, Douglas is a *spectator ab extra,* an unflinching reporter on experience. This volume is full of brilliant photographs as clearly detailed as the work of Richard Avedon, yet taken with a tender camera.

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Norman Glass

Collision Course

Sliding by LESLIE NORRIS *Dent* £3.95
Union Dues by JOHN SAYLES *Deutsch* £5.50
The Women's Room by MARILYN FRENCH *Deutsch* £5.25

Leslie Norris is Welsh, and the background to most of the 14 short stories in *Sliding* is his native countryside. His subject-matter is almost exclusively domestic but not at all limited in scope: the stories revolve on quite everyday happenings which are always lifted out of the ordinary by an unexpected little twist. Norris is frequently concerned with the effects of a mildly critical or violent event upon a member of a family or a group: he introduces shadows across an apparently bright, familiar landscape and shows, sooner or later, that it was never really very bright at all. His world is full of minor but effective collisions and of occasionally bitter insights.

Nearly all the characters in these stories belong intrinsically and sometimes fatally to their environment, as do the flora and fauna which Norris describes with the expertise of a poet naturalist. The majority of the stories are related in the first-person singular, in a calm, precise, conversational and carefully meandering manner which is immediately captivating. In the arrangement of the material, however, and in the architecture of each story there is deliberation and considerable subtlety. A dramatic event is never in itself a denouement; the story goes on to a generally quiet though telling conclusion.

To describe the novels by the American writers John Sayles and Marilyn French as one-dimensional would be to invest them with one dimension more than they actually possess. They are little more than comic-strip psychodramas pretentiously disguised as novels, with both writers deeply convinced that they are producing works of some significance; their machine-made prose reeks of stimulants. Sayles tends to fling his fist out in every direction, connecting nowhere, while French rattles along with obdurate banality. The basic shabbiness of their writing, as well as its reckless speed, prevents one from experiencing virtually anything. Even so, these books have some interest, if only because they illustrate the extent to which psychosis has spread and deepened in American life since Vietnam.

The pretext (it is hardly a plot because there is no real development) for *Union Dues* concerns the search of a widowed miner, Hunter, for his runaway younger son Hobie in a very downtown Boston. Yet hardly a single line is devoted to a description of the background. The book merely jerks forward with a series of thinly related, alternating scenes dealing with the adventures of Hunter and Hobie, until Hobie falls victim to a cop's brutality, while Hunter, having failed to find him, settles for a painfully obtained new job and a good woman. The raw material interest – life in the mines, trade union machinations, immigrant workers in factories – has some documentary value. However, Sayles crams his pages full of superfluous, down-here-in-it dialogue, presumably because he finds it entertaining and supposes that the reader will too. As it is, one is obliged to rummage for what may prove to be an important thread in the story. Hardly anything happens naturally or organically. An unexpected meeting between Hunter and his elder son Darwin proves hardly more consequential than, for instance, a short, temporary family reunion in the left-wing group, or a showdown between the cops and a drug addict. When it comes to the power struggle among the radicals, it looks, for a moment, as though Sayles is getting on to firmer ground, but once again everything proceeds through heavy storms of dialogue and snappy, inside summaries of the characters' attitudes.

'I guess I should get back to the story, but I turn in that direction with such weariness. Oh, those lives, those lives: Those years. You know how you feel when . . . ' sighs the opinionated narrator-writer of *The Women's Room*. Her regular appearances reflect, presumably, Marilyn French's attempt to create detachment, to establish distance between the narrator and her material. But the device leads only to chatterbox reflections about the characters and about the vicissitudes of life. This narrator comments: 'One thing that makes art different from life is that in art things have a shape; they have beginnings, middles, and endings. Whereas in life, things just drift along.' Ms French in her novel is clearly in favour of what she considers to be life; though *The Women's Room* races frantically ahead, rather than drifting along.

The book concerns the suburban lives – and subsequent Harvard careers – of a group of bouncing, excitable products of the Women's Liberation industry. Yet they are hardly given a chance to engage the reader's interest or sympathy, since they are handled in a breathless, journalistic fashion; they appear like vaudeville sketches rather than as authentic human personalities. The novel's heroine only emerges as such because more is written about her than about any other character. For the most part, Ms French's long run of trivial household incidents leaves one with the impression that the padding in the novel is the novel itself. There are occasional lyrical touches, and a few passages of sociological interest; but these are scanty rewards in an essentially puerile and often embarrassing book.

Among this week's contributors:

JOHN BAYLEY is the author of *Tolstoy and the Novel.*

CRAIG RAINE's *The Onion, Memory* will be published by Oxford this summer.

PAUL MARTIN is currently working on a play about his native South Africa.

The price of Robert Taylor's *The Fifth Estate*, advertised by Routledge last week at £9.50, is £7.50.

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SYMPOSIUM

F. R. Leavis, 1895-1978

George Steiner

F. R. Leavis was a teacher of genius. In a real sense, his 'Complete Works' are the generations of students whom he and Q. D. Leavis taught, and of so many of whom they in turn made teachers. It was they who 'enacted' and 'enforced' the two Arnoldian notions to which Leavis gave such incisive urgency: the 'high seriousness' of great literature, and the common pursuit in literature, in literary criticism and in teaching, of a 'criticism of life'. At his best – in his writings on George Eliot, on Conrad, on T. S. Eliot, on D. H. Lawrence, on Blake – Leavis was a critic of the first rank. He gave new aspects to the map of feeling and recognitions.

At the same time, and particularly during his later years, Leavis succumbed to deepening bitterness and to a sense of persecution and isolation. Some of his pronouncements and polemics are as *ad hominem*, as scurrilous and as opaque as any that have come from a major pen. The man who could dismiss Proust as negligible, who laboured to deny the crucial role of Edmund Wilson or Humphry House in a 'rediscovery' of Dickens which he himself had done so much to delay, or who could expend incessant vitriol over what he took to be the conspiratorial power of journalistic trivia, seemed to parody his own plea for 'humaneness' and 'centrality'. One is too close to the facts of the case to draw up a responsible balance-sheet. When the time comes, however, one imagines that the positive and the negative will be strangely poised. Meanwhile we are his and Mrs Leavis's debtors.

Geoffrey Grigson

Leavis, meaning his critical writing, affected me like cold lino worn thin in a January bathroom, so it would be very dishonest if I were to file past his books now with my hat off. Discernment, vigorous enjoyment and love, and lucidity, mark the best of always imperfect criticism. In these he was deficient. He was deaf to lyric, to that element in living (I reflect that the better critics have usually been poets as well – in our language alone, Dryden, Johnson, Coleridge, Arnold, Hopkins, the prose-poet Henry James, Wilson, Eliot, Auden); and to have passed a life in unpitying missionary pursuit of the heathen and pursuit of literature as an essence surely was inhuman and absurd? Leavis condemned frailty and foolishness as bad faith, and since he could not understand that literature, like society, is always 'in a bad way', he was unwise enough to push into his foreground what should have been no more than asides. Snow, for instance, does melt without having to be swept away – and Sunday journalism too. With other qualities or habits as well (habitual resentment, for one) Leavis certainly spread a sneering pulpiteering fanaticism; but I doubt myself if this did as much harm as we sometimes indignantly suppose. With warmth and maturity only the stubbornest cases fail to recover from that infection.

Kingsley Amis

Few people have much stomach for writing of the recently dead otherwise than favourably, and I hope that what I say here will not be taken as malicious or vengeful. But if I am to say anything more than that I regret the passing of F. R. Leavis as one who made life more interesting, not always in ways he might have wished, and simply as a human being, I must start by stating flatly that I think most of the work of his middle and later years grievously mistaken and sometimes harmful. Perhaps, coming from one who takes that view, the praise I offer may seem to gain credit.

Revaluation did me a service I prize highly: it taught me that the literature of the past was not something finished and done with, something about which a consensus of opinion either already existed or would shortly emerge. The famous essay on Milton showed me not only that there could be divergent opinions but that I could hold one myself. I now think that Leavis's and my opinions on this head were mistaken, but the principle stands.

Later I rejected a Great Tradition that was so thinly populated and could in no circumstances be added to. Later still I identified Leavis's D. H. Lawrence, even more than 'my' Lawrence, as an enemy of most of what I found valuable in human relations. And I came to be repelled by a critical and personal position perpetually on a war footing. But, like most of those of whom he wrote, Leavis will never be a closed subject.

David Lodge

F. R. Leavis's pre-eminence among modern English critics cannot be explained simply by pointing to the quality of his criticism. It was a cultural phenonemon – in Arnoldian terms, a convergence of the Man and the Moment.

The peak of Dr Leavis's influence came in the Forties and Fifties, when Eng. Lit. was a rapidly expanding academic subject in search of an ideology. Leavis gave it one – the ideology of resistance to 'mass culture' and the pursuit of personal 'maturity'; and he gave it a mythology too – the mythology of the prophet scorned in his own country (Cambridge), of the wounded, embattled crusader for true values. He turned criticism into conflict (with other dons, with Bloomsbury, with the *TLS*, with the British Council, with Lord Snow) and thus made it seem exciting. He affirmed its centrality to the health of both private and public life, and thus made it seem important. No wonder so many young teachers and students of English flocked to his standard.

What Leavis did *not* give to English Studies, on principle, was a methodology, and this was both a strength and a weakness of his teaching. A strength in that it made criticism a 'common pursuit', accessible to all, something you learned to do by doing it; a weakness in that it left the liberal humanistic study of literature theoretically defenceless against the challenges of more rigorous critical approaches deriving from linguistics, marxism and structuralism. However, a great many writers, critics and teachers who now occupy intellectual positions rather different from Dr Leavis's were originally enthused to the study of literature by his example; and this was perhaps his greatest single achievement.

D. J. Enright

I knew F. R. Leavis as a teacher, an editor, and an author.

As a teacher he was strong medicine. A few of his pupils resented so vigorous a personality, whose every word, tone, silence and gesture added definition and edge to his views – and fled. Some, with better minds, were taken over as if by a more potent form of being: they gained much, but the sense of entering into an embattled élite could entail losses too. Others, perhaps less sophisticated, or just unwilling to yield themselves even to patent superiority, profited less ambiguously, and greatly. Possibly FRL's greatest and most enduring influence travelled by way of his pupils' pupils, backed up by his writings, and spreading to countries remote from Cambridge, where in different conditions the bitter local intensities faded from the teaching.

I began to write for *Scrutiny* as an undergraduate, soon 'specialising' in an amateurish way in German literature. Looking back, I realise that FRL was an exceptionally courteous and unintrusive editor. The only offering of mine he quarrelled with was an essay on Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* in which he perceived less literary criticism than moralising on man's inhumanity to man: it was 'not for *Scrut-*

Our arts coverage has been somewhat abbreviated this week by the above symposium on F. R. Leavis, who died last Monday. The Radio, Art and 'This English' columns have been held over until next week.

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iny readers'. Otherwise his intervention was limited to a comma less, a comma more; he never argued about length, and he would insist on paying for a book one had bought to review.

Much later the situation was in some sense reversed, and at Chatto & Windus I read the manuscripts of FRL's last two books. There were obscure passages, and I supposed that if they baffled me, an old pupil, they might baffle others as well. Ian Parsons had looked after the Leavises ever since *New Bearings in English Poetry* in 1932, and great good will existed between author and publisher. (In an article printed in *Universities Quarterly* on FRL's 80th birthday in 1975, Parsons wrote: 'our very few disputes have been conducted with complete frankness on both sides, and resolved without rancour.') I felt less confident, but thought it my duty (an editor must do *something*) to pass on my incomprehensions and uncertainties. FRL was prompt and patient, scrupulous in thanking me for catching minor slips, and ('I frequent H. James too much') he rephrased some passages. Concerning the Leavisian style which has caused so much pain in some quarters, he could take a firm line: 'I'm afraid I'm obdurate.' When I suggested a way of rewriting a particularly involved sentence, he replied, '. . . nobody would believe it was *me*!' True, I had brought out 'the meaning', but lost the tone of voice, the cast of mind, and hence part of what he meant. He was unique.

Ian Hamilton

As with almost everyone I've ever spoken to about him, my own 'personal' dealings with Leavis were unflaggingly acrimonious. Early on, it seemed, I had been brought to his notice by some trusty lieutenant and my credentials guaranteed immediate and lasting odium: Oxford, wrote poetry, worked on the *TLS*, wrote for the NS, and so on. It was indeed an ugly list, and at odd moments – knowing how keenly he and his chaps felt about these things – I would catch myself feeling just a bit ashamed. After all, had I not begun life as a proto-Leavisite, been force-fed through the sixth-form on *Reading and Discrimination*, *Culture and Environment* and all the other sacred texts? Had I not often been heard, as a surly undergraduate at Oxford, sneering at the dozy aestheticism of my bibliophile tutor? And didn't I – well, more or less – agree that English studies had, or ought to have, a vital, civilising role in our cheapened culture? To have gone so far astray . . . no wonder he was cross.

The trouble always was, though, that it was impossible to be an admirer of Leavis, to acknowledge the general merit of his presence, without assenting to absolute enslavement. Impossible, that is, if you wished him to think well of you. And since enslavement would have involved dismissing the whole of American literature, and refusing to see – or, as far as one could make out, even look for – value in anything that had been written in the last 30 or so years, the price seemed rather high. Not too high for some, and the spectacle of obedient Leavisites burrowing away in the schools and universities often made the whole thing seem silly and sinister rather than just narrow and dogmatic. Leavis's own criticism – his engagement with specific texts as opposed to his overall view of the literary tradition – could be marvellously flexible and subtle (though, to my mind, more so on Eliot than on Lawrence), and it was regularly depressing to see just how much mediocrity his polemical fervour permitted him to sanction. Not a way to obituarise, perhaps – but then Leavis was uniquely choosy about who delivered his bouquets.

John Bayley

All good critics are natural authoritarians. They shape literature to the mould of their own personalities, and cajole the kind of reader who does not know what he thinks into submission or rebellion, but at least into making up his own mind. Even a critic who, like the late Lionel Trilling, pretends to be tentative and persuades by being gentlemanly is in fact always sure he is right. F. R. Leavis combined this necessary confidence with his own kind of devastating simplicity: in his own way he really was in the great didactic tradition of Dr Johnson or Blake. But in no sense was he a 'committed' critic in the continental style of Belinsky or Lukács or Sartre. His ideology could seem bizarre, but there was never anything second-hand or institutionalised about it: it rested on a true idiosyncracy of common sense. And he had marvellous taste. There is some irony in the fact that his lasting achievement as critic and teacher was not to have made disciples and converts but to have persuaded not very clever or subtle pupils to read and really respond to extremely clever and subtle authors – authors like George Eliot, Henry James, Conrad and D. H. Lawrence.

Clive James

Dismissal was one of Leavis's favourite activities. He 'dismissed' Auden and subsequently never seemed to notice that Auden was still there. There is no reason to think that anyone will be more successful at dismissing Leavis himself. His early books will last, even when the full implications are drawn from the fact that the bulk of his later work was of little value. It was hard to say this at the time – not just cowardice, but sympathy and respect, stayed the hand. The Leavisites thought that there was a conspiracy against their spiritual leader. Actually there was a conspiracy in favour of him. His parade of seriousness was taken far more seriously than it ought to have been.

Leavis played a decisive part in making the genteel bookman's once lofty position impossible to regain. The town-tamer did such a thorough job that the grateful turned a blind eye when he became a tyrant. Some of the tyrant's tricks were diverting to the independent onlooker. He had a salutary way of rounding on his more fervent disciples, so that boot-licking often led to broken teeth. But on the whole he was a chastening example of how a mind can die of its own dogmas. He was less interested in the truth than in being right. He thought that criticism was indispensable to art, whereas they are independent of each other, although both are indispensable to civilisation. Most fatally of all, he became convinced that his message mattered so much it didn't matter how he wrote it down. His later prose hates itself, as well it might. When you unravel it, there is nothing there. In the days when he had something to say, he wrote clearly – and made his permanent contribution.

Malcolm Bradbury

F. R. Leavis is one of that very, very tiny handful of critics in our time who will take an essential and significant place in the great tradition of literary criticism which he did so much to make explicit and then urgently and actively to extend.

We live in a century abundant with criticism, yet we attach no great meaning to the activity, detaching it more and more from the serious work of writing, the serious making of a worthwhile culture. Leavis began by displacing from the study of English the idea that it was solely a mode of historical scholarship or, worse, a context for the release of subjective emotions; he made every act of valuation a serious matter.

It was a work that began in the 1930s but perhaps attained its strongest power in the 1950s, when I was an undergraduate, not in his university but at a small redbrick. The very fact that I studied literature, however, and regarded it as a serious mode of knowing, traces back to him; his power was to make English Studies a serious and profound subject, to make education in the humanities the basis of a deeply grounded critique both of the conduct of our individual lives and our communal lives as participants in a culture, to attach a fundamental value to education, evaluation, to living itself. It was hard to write in Leavis's world, but it was fundamental to read. Later, as criticism 'professionalised' itself further, new abstractions and evasions of evaluation occurred; Leavis's anger was necessary in new form.

It was a fundamental anger, and we cannot afford to lose it, whether we are teachers, critics, writers, or conscious agents in the making of those 'standards of living' which, as Leavis stressed, must always be more than economics. Leavis touched an essential tradition of dissent that was more than a politics; he was a major force, not just because an occasion suited him, but because of a compelling power of mind and value which remains as urgently needed as when he began the devastating task of scrutiny.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON's new collection of poems, *The Fiesta*, is due this summer.

KINGSLEY AMIS's new novel, *Jake's Thing*, will be published in the autumn.

DAVID LODGE's last novel was *Changing Places*.

D. J. ENRIGHT's books include *Sad Ires and Others*.

IAN HAMILTON is the author of *The Visit*.

CLIVE JAMES's latest book was *Fan-Mail*.

MALCOLM BRADBURY's most recent novel was *The History Man*.

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Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Ship of Fools

Plenty *Lyttelton*
Henry VI *Aldwych*
Directions to Servants *Riverside*
The Unvarnished Truth *Phoenix*

Plenty is what many people must have had of the budding bard after spending all Saturday at the Aldwych; but first things first. It is also the calculatedly sarcastic title David Hare has given his new play at the National. To and fro this whisks us in its darting, cinematic style, from occupied France to the England of the 1950s and early 1960s, and all with the object of confronting us with out blasted hopes and dashed dreams. It comes, logically enough, from the same uneasy imagination that recently concocted *Teeth 'n' Smiles*, which chronicled the latter stages of a rock group's descent from glory, its capitulation to drugs, booze, self-doubt, paranoia, incompetence and despair. That ended, if you recall, with a savage little song about the *Titanic*, an obvious emblem, like the band itself, for poor sinking Britain. But this time disillusionment has no metaphor to camouflage it: it is out in the open, demanding the stage for itself and the nation for its stage. We English emerged from the last war believing that before long the land would flow with milk and honey, and, instead, it flowed with marketing men, advertising agencies and speculators in stocks. Plenty was promised, little actually achieved.

So Mr Hare suggests, and I am not old enough to quarrel with his reading of the mood of 1945, though I suspect he has overstated its optimism. What worries me rather more, given the theme, is his stinginess with historical detail later on, his failure to fill in his characters' social, economic and political context more thoroughly. Mostly, we're in the company of Susan, an agent in France at the time of the liberation and a woman who finds postwar life increasingly inhospitable. We watch her moping over the advertising copy she's been hired to write, raging at the perversity of Suez, successfully ruining the career of her FO husband, and then running amok through their Knightsbridge flat, smashing the china in impotent protest against the wealth she supposes to be sapping her happiness. We leave her in 1962, after a one-night stand in a shoddy hotel with a fellow-drifter from Special Operations, but we leave the play itself in 1944, while she's still staring excitedly across the reclaimed French landscape and assuring a passing farmer that 'there will be days and days and days like this'. As you may imagine, the prophecy falls from her lips with a frightful crash of old irony.

I don't think Susan's observation of Britain is sufficiently sweeping or her experience representative enough to give the play quite the scope Mr Hare wants; but she herself undeniably seizes the attention and teases the mind, because she's a muddle and a puzzle, a conformist rebel and a destructive idealist. Her war behind the lines left her eager to see a nation fit for heroes. It also made her self-absorbed, deceitful and callous, a woman personally incapable of creating anything fit for anyone. Indeed, so aloof and hole-and-corner is her temperament that she actually goes to the black market to get pregnant, telling the East-End hustler she scarcely knows (and proposes promptly to forget) that 'deep down I'd rather do the whole damn thing myself'. It's a character that should bolster Mr Hare's reputation for writing good – and, among contemporary playwrights, uniquely good – roles for women, and it's played by Kate Nelligan with a disdain so piercing that the rest of the cast visibly shrivels beside her. If Stephen Moore has his moments as a benign husband pushed past the frontiers of endurance, Julie Covington can do little with a vaguely bohemian confidante whose part might as well consist of the green cross code, given that she's mainly required to look, listen, and look again. In sum, the play is solid enough at the centre, but sketchy at the edges, and probably needed a director tough enough to demand some rewriting of the author. However, both men are Mr Hare, and each has gone easy on the other.

It was, as I say, a long Saturday. Just before elevenses Henry V was buried; about the time the Football League kicked off, his son was mismatched with Margaret of Anjou; between the soup and the savoury Rutland was killed; and the pubs closed as the future Richard III skewered the wretched Henry VI. Towards the end of the trilogy's third part, with the battles increasingly humdrum, and Shakespeare's verse as grimly iambic as ever, most eyelids must have begun to droop; but by then it was already clear that the rewards for virtuous perseverance had been considerable. Emrys James's York, hugging himself in an ecstasy of self-love. John Rhys-Davies's splenetic Beaufort, Helen Mirren's rasping Margaret, Charlotte Cornwall's gleeful Joan of Arc, Julian Glover's brusque Warwick, Anton Lesser's hoodlum Crookback. Above all, Alan Howard's Henry: in boyhood, shy and puzzled, reacting to the roaring Talbot as an apprentice zoologist might to a suddenly reincarnated tyrannosaurus; in old age, marvellously serene and untouchable, 'a king in mind, and that's enough'. With everything crammed into one day, I found it easier than at Stratford to see the logic of the course so subtly steered between these extremities, and, indeed, simpler to follow the crisp, clean history-lesson Terry Hands's production presents. See all three parts, if you can. But if you've time or stomach for just one or two, take in the second, because there character unambiguously asserts its primacy over event, and event vividly includes that overblown punk rumble, the Cade rebellion.

Shuji Terayama's *Directions to Servants* is based roughly on Swift, and roughly is the word. What would that concise and measured mind have made of an adaptation full of bald Japanese writhing about the floor like maggots, snarling and barking like dogs, cramming each other into monster machines, then dressing up in furs and dancing through smoke to garish musak, like caricatures by Beckmann or Grosz? The idea behind these sado-masochistic frolics seems to be that men crave simultaneously to dominate and be dominated, to reject their masters and to retain them; and, if this isn't exactly intellectually cogent, it is visually spectacular, even thrilling – Swift, tossed about by the Sadists and surrealists, seized on by Artuad, rewritten by Genet, and staged by Pilobolus.

Phew. And what, after this, of such minutiae as Royce Ryton's *Unvarnished Truth*? Well, it's best to hold your nose and jump, trying your best to believe its postulates, which are that women expire when lightly knocked about the chops and that a policeman may be so anxious to spare an intruder's nerves that he'll hide a body in the loo, thus irretrievably tampering with the evidence. Once you've splashed in, there's some gorgeously ebullient farce to enjoy.

Films

John Coleman

Real Trouble

Sweeney 2 (AA) *ABCs Shaftesbury Avenue and Fulham Road*
Improperly Dressed (AA) *Minema*
L'Amour Fou *Brighton Film Theatre 29 April*
The Devil's Advocate (AA) *Plaza 3*

'They're blaggers – they rob banks.' A couple of weeks ago I would have been grateful for the gloss (equivalent to one of those asterisks in *Time* magazine) swiftly appended in Troy Kennedy Martin's script for the second spin-off from that tough TV series about the Flying Squad. But *Sweeney 2*, fickle jade that I am, has already been superseded by another television event, G. F. Newman's *Law and Order*, inevitably produced by that extraordinary stickler for the facts, Tony Garnett. The old, old question, 'How true is true?', is raised again and I don't propose even to try to answer it. What was clear from last week's small-box film written by Newman, *A Villain's Tale*, with its terrifying moral greyness, its rampant argot, its mumbled asides, was simply that this felt a mucky shade closer to that area where cops and robbers mingle than any fictional representation one had yet witnessed (a few times in my life I have stumbled into the wrong pubs or clubs, heard more than I wanted to, and known fear). So the new *Sweeney* movie, kept briskly moving by a director from telly, Tom Clegg, came out milder and jokier than may have been intended. Inspector Regan (John Thaw) and his faithful sidekick Sergeant Carter (Dennis Waterman), 'humanised' by their flagged and unflagging womanising and a virile way with the bottle, seemed less – here we go – *real* this time round, more actorish in their bedraggled probity.

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However, they provide the week's most skilled escapist entertainment. Denholm Elliott has another seedy cameo, as a jailed superintendent, Regan's ex-boss; the piece opens on a bank robbery and enough corpses strewn around to fill a Jacobean stage; there's a sub-plot entailing a defused bomb and various, warring arms of the law merrily carousing in the threatened building's bar while poor Carter, dressed as a waiter, acts the hero. The blaggers are a hard but improbable bunch, always stealing the same amount on their bank jobs, known for their sawn-off shotgun and given to dispatching any one of their number who gets wounded in action. They live communally in a sunny development in Malta, with attendant wives, babies and swimming pool: when they get their come-uppance in a blood-soaked finale, it turns out from their last will and testament that all they had wanted was to leave a diseased England and make a good life for their dependants elsewhere: an unlikely tale and hardly a villain's one.

Improperly Dressed is the fifth feature by the Hungarian director Pal Sandor – an atmospheric piece finely photographed by Elemer Ragalyi and somewhat reminiscent of the surrealist Wajda of *Ashes and Diamonds*. Set back in December 1919, it concerns a Communist lad on the run from the Whites, finding haven rigged out as a girl in a sanatorium near wintry woods. He/she, very convincingly played by Endre Holman of the suggestive, curly mouth, is reluctantly taken on as a junior nurse while waiting for a companion to arrive before they escape over the border. Impressionistic to a fault, it is best when sketching in the home's weird inhabitants: some scabrous old ladies gossiping on massage tables, an equivocal game of blind man's buff, the antics of an itinerant photographer whose young daughter is to die there, a single night of love between the boy and a beautiful Italian woman. Some little suspense hangs on the boy's dilemma, culminating in his attempted rape by a randy officer. The officer is killed and his body disposed of; but time is now running out, the awaited companion turns up and there is a sticky end. Elusive, haunting, the anecdote picks up most power by trapping a five-month interlude out of war, with the boy ambiguously settling for his double role: it begins to look as if he will lose the spur to action, somehow become his masquerade.

Within the context of the main Brighton Festival, the RFT there will be showing sf movies and tributes to Michael Powell and Jacques Rivette (28 April-8 May). There is a growing, not to say oedematous body of work being devoted to M. Rivette, a very serious French filmmaker with an increasing tendency to let his films just sprawl. Apart from *Céline and Julie Go Boating*, I have consistently abhorred the results so far and a viewing of his 4¼ hour version of *L'Amour Fou* (1969) the other afternoon-and-evening altered nothing. The film itself shall be properly reviewed should it ever find a London house. Very briefly, it is a combination of 16 mm and 35 mm: a TV team, using the first, is shooting a reportage on Sébastien (Jean-Pierre Kalfon) interminably rehearsing what shows signs of being the world's dullest production of *Andromaque* – no mean feat – while the fairly static Mitchell camera watches Sébastien's neurotic wife, Claire (Bulle Ogier), walk out of the leading role of Hermione, to be replaced by Sébastien's ex-mistress, Marta (Josée Destoop) and to indulge in a loony marital break-up: the big, nearly interesting scene shows the tiresome couple slashing their apartment to bits during bouts of love-making. It is much, much duller than life. Guy Green's *The Devil's Advocate*, with Vatican priest John Mills dying of cancer and on a last assignment to determine whether an Abruzzi partisan martyr is due for canonisation, is marginally sprightlier: or is it just shorter?

Television

Julian Barnes

Wired for Sound

There's bad news this week for those of you who have campaigned for so long to have Russell Harty's teeth wired together. It wouldn't work. The first guest on the new series of *Russell Harty* (LWT) was a fat, bright and unfamous girl who'd had her teeth wired together in an attempt to lose weight (this was an appropriate, if somewhat arch irony, since the show specialises in slim, dumb, famous people with their mouths open and their brains wired up). What emerged was that, even with your jaws cemented together (no fun for your mouth, which silts up with festering gouts of inaccessible garbage), you can still get the words out in an almost normal fashion. Well, 'normal' in the sense that you sound exactly like Janet Street-Porter; and if you can't remember how she talks, the most popular graffito in Television Centre lavatories will enlighten you: 'The *t* is silent, as in Janet Street-Porter.'

Harty's other guests were standard enough fare: a bed-of-nails expert who at one point had 1,800 lbs. of Royston College girls on his chest, and whom Harty twitted patronisingly for his yobbo English (after ticking him off for a lie/lay mistake, Harty closed the first half with 'join Roy and I and the girls in a couple of minutes'); plus Liberace. Low camp deferred rightly to high camp. They chuckled away about snoring, pimples, pooberty and male jewellery – 'People say how do you play with all those rings on and I usually say very well' – before a clip of Liberace's home helped with a question that's been niggling me ever since the start of *The South Bank Show*. That programme-card they use, of Michelangelo's *Creation*, with the superimposed bolt of lightning from God's finger to Adam's: was it, I've always wondered, an indication of the show's high seriousness (i.e. a weekly examination of the nature and origin of creative energy) or merely of the show's high camp (i.e. Melvyn breathes life into dull sods)? Well, guess what picture Liberace has tastefully frescoed on his bedroom ceiling?

As for Janeh Sree-Pawer, her garish *London Weekend Show* (LWT), catering for what it calls 'television's lost generation', celebrated its 100th edition this week with a survey of the last three years of rough music. Janet proudly scooped the first interview with Johnny Rotten since the break-up of the Sex Pistols way back in January. As they wandered through fittingly wrecked streets and past boarded-up demolition sites, Rotten, who now lives in Chelsea, displayed a wry pertness which took grizzled viewers back years. 'Now you split up, how you occupying your time?' 'Boringly.' 'How can you resolve the situation with your partner?' 'Kill 'im.' Rotten stared into the lens like a cheeky corpse and murmured, 'Cheap-looking camera', then turned to Janet and quipped, 'Your hair looks like rhubarb.' He must have been studying archive interviews with the Fab Four.

Arena (BBC-2), with art and cinema under its belt, has now moved in on a third form, television itself. The first programme consisted of a trot round the topical, if familiar, problems raised by the drama documentary: its truth, objectivity, responsibility to the facts and the audience, etc. As often happens when TV programme-makers discuss their own medium, there was a universal assumption that their particular problems had been brought into existence only by the invention of television: no one seemed aware that there might have been fiction/faction difficulties with, say, Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, or *In Cold Blood*, and that what they were puzzling over was not new, merely altered. Only Tony Garnett showed a vigorous recognition of wider social and artistic contexts. While it was useful to hear Paul Watson's *mea culpa* about *The Family* (he described himself as 'on a trip' when he made it), what the show really needed was an old-fashioned face-to-face between the different echelons involved. Alasdair Milne, who banned *Scum*, remarked that his final, decisive question (to himself) was, 'of what truth is this the dramatic portrayal?' Why not have someone answer that directly?

The preceding programme on BBC-1, *The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald*, had on-scene reconstructions, fake newsreels and actors playing people still alive – yet managed to raise few of *Arena*'s basic questions. This was largely because, apart from John Pleshette's frowning Oswald, high-chinned with paranoia, the actors resembled nothing more than actors in a TV courtroom drama – wide-eyeing at each other lines like, 'A connexion between . . . the MARFIA and the CIA???' Oswald even had a climactic emotional outburst at the end of the trial in best Erle Stanley Gardner style, before 'Ruby' shot him on the way to hear the jury's verdict. Yet even such a low-rent dramamentary sent those familiar, insoluble Kennedy questions clumping round the head in large boots.

The affable Graham Miles lost the tenth *Pot Black* trophy (BBC-2), though he should get a prize for endearing quaintness: he plays with his head lowered weightily over his cue like a ruminant at a waterhole (he must have worn a cleft in his chin by now), and sports a waistcoat whose front panels are as narrow as bra-straps yet still con-

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tain room enough for lacy revers. But what chance had such a man against Doug Mountjoy, who was 'playing like a symphony orchestra' (Ted Lowe)?

A beautiful example of self-wrecking confidence came from Erin Pizzey, the panellist selected this week by *Read All About It* (BBC-1) to ease the show further towards full critical democracy. She couldn't actually read any of her Defoe novel because of the long sentences and the old-fashioned English; and when asked about Peter Porter's poetry, she announced authoritatively that he was 'selling out'. This, she explained without sniffing a paradox, was because he was 'writing for his peers', i.e. for people more intelligent than she was. But we weren't to run away with the idea that Erin knew nothing about poetry. On the contrary: she read it; she liked it; why, she could even give us opinions about it. One guess. Yes, that's right: 'Paul McCartney is a great poet.'

Weekend Competition

No 2511 **Set by T. A. Dyer**

The Russian presence in Africa has not yet, as far as we know, produced much literature. Why not help them out with a Chekovian scene in Addis Abbaba, some barrackski rooms ballads. Any form; by 5 May.

Result of No 2508 Set by W. J. Webster

We asked you to compose an interview between Graham Greene and the only person left who has not yet grilled him – the *maître* himself.

Report **by Fat Jeff**

A vintage comp this: our talented winners deserve not a Wilson less than eight Newtons apiece.

As soon as I reached the compound outside his house I knew he wasn't there.

I had flown from London that morning specially to meet him, but I wasn't disappointed. I was used to failure, missing people. Disappointment was a luxury I couldn't afford any more, like love or hate. 'Love him or hate him, you certainly can't ignore him,' they'd said to me. I wasn't so sure.

The front door was swinging back and forth on its hinges, while a fly buzzed around the hallway, looking for food. It wouldn't find any: he never kept food in the house. Food was yet another possession that weighed you down, made demands on you that you didn't want to meet.

The heat was intense. A vulture circled round, its shadow passing and repassing me. I went into the house. There was the smell of body odour in the hall, and stale caporal. It was the smell of defeat, of confused loyalties, of desperate intentions never fulfilled.

J. Y. Watson

GG1: Is it true you've stopped sending in Graham Greene parodies to the Weekend Competition?
GG2: On the contrary, I now *set* Graham Greene competitions, too.
GG1: Under a pseudonym, no doubt?
GG2: Of course.
GG1: So presumably you set *this* comp, then?
GG2: Naturally. You didn't think W. J. Webster was a real person, did you? He's as fictional as Fagg, Parrott, Sharpless and Vita-Finzi.
GG1: You don't mean to say . . .
GG2: I'm afraid so.
GG1: Not Tim Hopkins as well?
GG2: *Especially* Tim Hopkins.
GG1: Then this entry is what one might call a triple bluff.
GG2: I suppose it is – an Unholy Trinity, perhaps.

Tim Hopkins

GG2: I try hard to make each book a little worse than the one before – a little more false, sentimental and rhetorical – but it's no good – the reviews keep on getting better and better.
GG1: When did you first realise that you could hardly fail to succeed at big failure through huge literary success?
GG2: When I first cooked up that Russian Roulette nonsense – I forgot quite when. A more tawdrily self-dramatising little anecdote you could hardly imagine – but just look how they fell for it. Anyone with any nous knows that a single cartridge spun in a six-shooter will almost certainly gravitate to the bottom of the chamber. The chances of my killing myself were about 200 to 1 against – even if we had actually pressed the trigger.
GG1: Didn't we?
GG2: I can hardly remember . . .
GG1: It can't be all jam, being a 20th-century Polycrates.
GG2: No – but they crucified him in the end – so I live in hopes . . .

Robin Ravensbourne

GG1: It's been suggested that God in your work is a symbol for whisky. Would you care to comment?
GG2: Not really. (*Chuckles.*) Although I suppose they both belong to the realm of spirit. Actually I think God is becoming a structured absence in my work.
GG1: Is that because you feel death approaching like a dental appointment?
GG2: No, it's because I've been living in Paris. Would you like a pipe of opium?
GG1: Thank you no, I'm attending Mass. Well, on second thoughts, yes.
GG2: There's no sight in the world like the taste of opium.
GG1: There's no worm in the soul like the pope ad nauseam.
GG2: So it was you they sent. Listen, we can't talk here. Leave five minutes after me and go down to Fidel's bar. It's between the railway station and the brothel, just across from the cathedral.
GG1: What if I should be betrayed?
GG2: Oh, don't worry about that.

Basil Ransome

Tony Miles

Chess

No 80 **An Unfamiliar Variation**

Anyone who watched the BBC-2 Master Game series last year may recall mention being made of the first replay of the final when I caught Karpov in a twenty-move deep opening line which I had played before. At the time Leonard Barden commented that this sort of thing occurred very rarely, maybe once in several hundred years. By a remarkable coincidence I have since caught two other world-class grandmasters in exactly the same line within six months, all three being completely unfamiliar with the variation. The only irritating thing is that all three managed to draw.

The variation in question starts **1. P-QB4, N-KB3; 2. N-QB3, P-K3; 3. P-K4.** This is an increasingly popular method of resisting the Nimzo Queen's Indian complex. There are now two serious continuations: 3. . . .P-Q4 and 3. . . .P-B4, the latter being more popular at the highest level. **3. . . . P-B4; 4. P-K5, N-N1; 5. N-B3!?** This involves a pawn sac, but is more interesting than 5. P-Q4. **5. . . .N-QB3; 6. P-Q4, P x P; 7. N x P, N x P; 8. N(Q4)-N5, P-QR3.** On 8. . . .P-Q3? 9. P-B5!, as in Timman-Najdorf at the Haifa Olympiad '76, is strong. **9. N-Q6ch, B x N; 10. Q x B, P-B3! 11. B-K3(!).** This is my innovation and, I think, more accurate than the older 11. B-B4 or 11. P-QN3. **11. . . . N-K2.** Best. 11. . . . N-B2; 12. Q-N3 is unpleasant. **12. B-N6.** Otherwise 12. . . .N-B4 is good. **12. . . .N-B4; 13. B x Q, N x Q; 14. B-B7!** The point is that black cannot take the QBP. If . . .N(4) x P; 15. P-QN3 or . . .N(3) x BP; 15. P-B4. So white maintains a lasting initiative for the pawn. **14. . . .K-K2; 15. P-B5, N-K1; 16. B-N6, P-Q4; 17. P x Pch, N x P; 18. 0-0-0.**

My first game with this line – the one in which I worked all this out – was against the Argentinian L. Bronstein at Sao Paulo last year. Then I played 18. B-B5 and won after . . .N-Q2; 19. B-R3, P-QN3; 20. 0-0-0, N-B4; 21. N-R4! N x N; 22. R x N, K-B2; 23. P-QN3 etc. However, during that game I noticed that black could play 18. . . .P-QN3! returning the pawn and getting good piece play, so I preferred 18. 0-0-0 on subsequent occasions.

At this point all three opponents sank into thought, and the games finally went their separate ways. Karpov produced the surprising 18. . . .B-Q2 and later opined 'only move'. That game continued 19. B-B5, N-B2; 20. N-K4, QR-B1; 21. K-N1, R-B3; 22. B-K2, R-Q1; 23. B-R3, P-K4; 24. B-Q3, B-B4; 25. N x N, B x Bch; 26. R x B, N x N; 27. R(1)-Q1 and a draw was soon agreed. Black is completely tied down, but white has no way to improve his position.

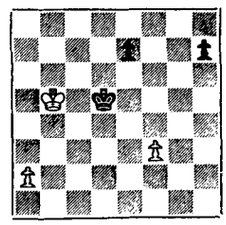
The second opponent, Hübner, at Tilburg, found 18. . . .N(4)-B5, also considering it the 'only move'! I continued 19. B x N? (better is 19. B-Q4 *and if* . . .P-K4; 20. B-B5) N x B; 20. B-B5ch, K-B2; 21. R-Q4, P-QN4; 22. P-QN3, N-R4; 23. B-N6, N-N2; 24. R(1)-Q1 and a draw was agreed, though after 24. . . .R-K1 white probably does not have enough for the pawn.

The third opponent was Polugaevsky at Reykjavik. He tried 18. . . .N(4)-B2 considering it 'best'. That one concluded 19. P-KN3, B-Q2; 20. B-R3, KR-QB1; 21. KR-K1, P-K4; 22. B-N2, B-B3; 23. B-R3, B-Q2; 24. B-N2, B-B3; 25. B-R3 Draw!

It seems that this variation does not pose sufficiently complex problems actually to defeat top-class opposition. If I ever see the position after 18. 0-0-0 again I think I will claim a draw by repetition.

Problem 80

White to play. How should the game go? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 3 May.



Solution to Problem 78

1. . . .Q x Pch! Resigns. Since if 2. K x Q, B x Pch wins or 2. R x Q, R-Q8ch; 3. R-B1, B x Pch mates.

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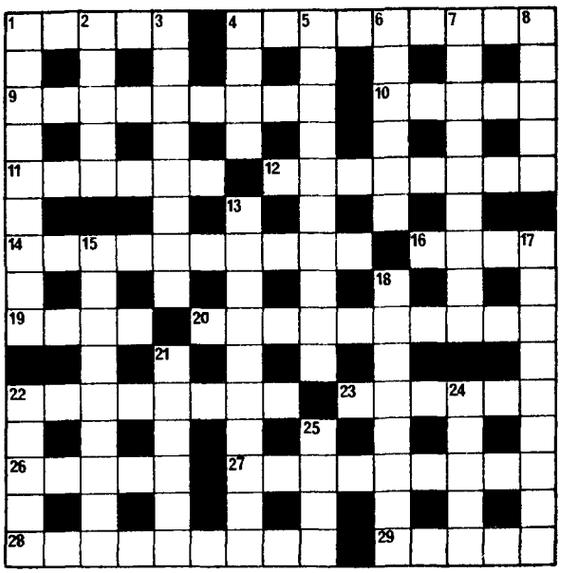
PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1260, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 2 May.



ACROSS

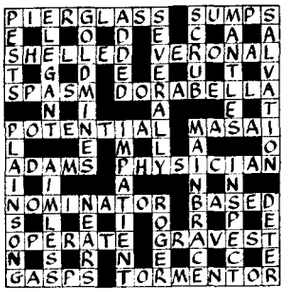
1. Notices symptoms (5).
4. Knew what the complaint was and met his end with a melody back in the heart (9).
9. Wrongly ban voters for being attentive (9).
10. Boat whose wreckage is seen in the ocean (5).
11. Immaturity of a man on a general degree course (6).
12. Food a member put into cooking vessels (8).
14. Not back after fighting for a place (10).
16. Account for a tool (4).
19. Even appearing before one it is an odd beast (4).
20. Assigning value to fashion is becoming less intense (10).
22. Mount in a funny place — on the chest! (8).
23. A small island, it will do for a solitary person (6).
26. Not bright, showing that fifty goes into one (5).
27. Yield to circumstances but make speed increase (9).
28. Woman spread out and on show (9).
29. Features of scenery provided for famous actors (5).

DOWN

1. Where there is no fighting without end in a tale (9).
2. Lime seen in the moors once in a while (5).
3. Oils gear change for women (8).
4. Portray something attractive (4).
5. Star no more mixed up by a student of it (10).
6. Trance gives me something enjoyed by the gods (6).
7. A small island and one with no trains running on it (9).
8. Habit of custodian who has lost the war (5).
13. Lying freely about a prayer without knowing the truth (10).
15. Bags refer to return in regulations (9).
17. The slings are redesigned to secure mobility (9).
18. Without shoes, but he'd be a game runner if he lost his advantage (8).
21. A shilling less and it would be more luxurious accommodation (6).
22. Money for a poet (5).
24. Has large ears and holds one in bewilderment (5).
25. In the centre of the team I defend stubbornly (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1258



Prizewinners to No 1258

Tony Hockenhull (Lee on Solent)
Lesley Cunningham (Montrose)
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Applications are invited from artists in the U.K. for the Ronald Tree Fellowship. This will be held for a period of up to twelve months at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados.

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HARLOW

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The C.C.E.T.S.W. is a statutory but independent body responsible for the promotion and recognition of training courses for social workers and other social care personnel in educational institutions throughout the United Kingdom. The Council has established a Clearing House for applications to post-graduate and non-graduate social work courses leading to the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work. The Clearing House is located in Rugby in offices adjoining those of the Council's regional staff team covering the Midlands.

Applications are invited for the post of Administrative Officer to be based in Rugby but responsible for the day-to-day work of the Clearing House to the Principal Registration Officer in London. Applicants should have a good general knowledge of the further and higher education system and of the personal social services. A relevant degree or diploma together with administrative experience is desirable, and an interest in data collection and analysis would be an advantage. The Administrative Officer will be required to attend occasional meetings in London.

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company). 836 6404. Recorded bkg info 836 5332. Shakespeare's 'Henry V' and 'Henry VI': Parts 1, 2 and 3 in repertoire. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse in Strindberg's 'The Dance of Death', John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore', Paul Thompson's 'The Lorenzaccio Story'. And at Piccadilly Theatre in Peter Nichol's 'Privates on Parade'.

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HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. Prevs from 4 May. Georgina Hale, Susan Hampshire, Richard Moore, Peter Woodthorpe in 'The Tribades' by Per Olof Enquist. Mon.-Sat. 8 p.m.

NATONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Brand', 'The Country Wife', 'The Guardsman', 'Plenty', 'Don Juan comes back from the war', 'Larkrise'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Evgs 8, Sats 5 & 8.30 'Class Enemy' by Nigel Williams.

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Exhibitions

ROYAL ACADEMY, Diploma Galleries, Burlington House: Stowels Trophy Exhibition. Prize selection of the best paintings and original prints by Students at the main art colleges. Wed.-Sun. 26-30 April inc. 10 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt Turnstille, WC1, 405 9836, have published a new colour lithograph by Arthur Boyd 'Jinker on a Sandbank' 18" x 23" Edition 100, signed and numbered. £150 plus VAT.

Meetings

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UNITY THEATRE SOCIETY

To all bona fide members and supporters of Unity Theatre. Notice of the Society's AGM has been posted at the Society's premises — 1 Goldington Street, NW1 (according to Rule).

Those wishing to stand for the Management Committee should contact the Chairman at 48 Shirlock Road, NW3. 267 3098 and the appropriate arrangements will be made.

The AGM is on 30 April. Venue to be notified. Members being circularised.

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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (Gower St, WC1E 6BT). The Freud Memorial Lectures in Psychoanalysis by Dr J. H. Rey. 2 May, 'Schizoid Personality Structures and Space-Time Factors'. 4 May 'The Dynamics of Psychoanalytic and Psycho-Linguistic Structures'. Details of Public Lectures from Publications Office, University College London, Gower Street, WC1E 6BT. (Stamped envelope required).

MAYDAY MEETING: One World — Two Classes. Workers, Throw off your Chains! Organised by Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist). Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., WC1. Monday 1 May at 7.30 p.m.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, Blind Lane, Bourne End, Bucks: Sun. 23 April Swami Bhavyananda on 'The Gospel of Divine Love' at 4 p.m. All welc. Vedanta mag. 50p.

THEOSOPHY. Informal Forum on Basic Theosophy, Sun. 23 April, 8 p.m. All welcome. S.a.e. free pamphlet, talks programme, booklist. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

BUDDHISM IN LONDON. Details: British Buddhist Assoc. 242 5538 (office hrs).

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: The John Coffin Memorial Literary Readings will be given by Dame Peggy Ashcroft and Mr Ian McKellen entitled 'Homage to Neruda' at the University of London, Beveridge Hall, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1, at 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, 27 April 1978. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

A JOINT MEETING Focus Group-UNICEF at the Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Ave, WC2, on Tuesday 2 May, 6.30. A talk by Phil Vincent, Project Support Communications Officer, UNICEF, East Africa: 'Communications at the grass roots in the developing World'. Admission 30p for non-RCS members.

SHAW SOCIETY. Friday, 28 April. Benny Green on 'Shaw, The Serious Comedian.' Coffee 6.30, lecture 7 p.m. Conway Hall, WC1.

Courses

NORTH LONDON POLYTECHNIC: Self Help Housing. 10 week evening course 'Housing and the Local Community', commencing Wednesday, 26 April, dealing with self help in housing, community action, squatting and housing cooperatives (inc. practical sessions). Further info: Bill James, Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove, NS. 01-607 2789 ext. 5027.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (Gower Street, WC1) Sesquicentennial Colloquia 'The University Today.' Thurs. 4 May 'Learning from University College's History' by Mr J. W. Scott, Thurs. 11 May 'What are Universities For?' by Professor S. Rose. Tues. 16 May 'The Choices facing the Universities' by Lord Boyle. Wed. 24 May 'Are British Universities in Danger?' by Professor R. Dahrendorf. All at 5.30 p.m. Admission free, without ticket.

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